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BEAUTY.

BY J. G. MANLY, JR.

At Beauty's feet with raptured gaze
We love, with kindling souls, to kneel;
Her smiles the wounded heart can raise,
And make the breasts of tyrants feel.

We love to hear her gentle tone,
We love to see her moving near,
We love to sit with her alone,
And tell we love when none can hear.

And sorrow fades in Beauty's sight,
And all our cares are swiftly fled,
When happiness, in roseate light,
From Beauty's eyes is softly shed.

There's one brief hour—oh, scorn it not—
The rapture of the poet's song,
And dreams of heaven haunt the spot
Where love and Beauty linger long

In Beauty's sight we live again;
For Beauty should we even die;
'Twould not be strange, the sons of men
Have done it oft without a sigh.

The Red Rajah:

OR,

THE SCOURGE OF THE INDIES.

A TALE OF THE MALAYAN ISLES.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,

(LAUNCE POYNTZ.)

AUTHOR OF "MUSTANG HUNTERS," "KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," "THE GRIZZLY HUNTERS," "THE BLACK WIZARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

CATCHING A TARTAR.

THE strife on the deck of the man-of-war, so suddenly boarded by the Red Rajah, was sanguinary and ferocious to the last degree. The Malays, wild with excitement, plunged into a hand-to-hand struggle with loud yells. The sailors of the man-of-war were armed with cutlasses and revolvers, and their fire was tremendous. But the red-clothed pirates, with their long krisses, stained with poison,* were so closely jammed up with the others, that the cutlasses were almost useless, and many of the sailors were driven to their sheath-knives.

Still the incessant fire of the revolvers for the first few moments made such slaughter among the pirates, that they wavered in their assault.

The trumpet-like voice of the Red Rajah, shouting "*Mari! Mari!*" (come on! come on!) restored the combat to more of equality. His men appeared to be electrified at the sound, and pressed forward, following his tall figure.

A revolver in each hand, and his long kriss between his teeth, the Red Rajah dashed into the press, shooting right and left. At every shot a man fell, and the rest bore back before the terror of his glance.

It was plain, from the presence of revolvers on board, that the corvette was no Dutchman. The fact was that the English squadron on the coast had determined to wipe out the famous pirate who had scourged the seas so long, and one of their vessels had disguised herself to follow him. Had the corvette kept them at long bowls, she could have destroyed the war-boats with a few of her heavy broadsides. Fearing their escape by superior swiftness, the captain of the "Vengeance" had enticed them close in by his disguise.

With ordinary Malays the device would have been a sure success. They would have turned tail at the first sight of the sloop's battery. But the Red Rajah was made of sterner stuff. He knew his immense superiority in numbers, and determined to use it.

While his own crew was boarding the corvette on the starboard side, the second war-boat swept round on the other tack, and ran up alongside of the Englishman on the port side.

The third pirate luffed up on the corvette's quarter, just as the Rajah was boarding, and sent a whole volley of grape-shot into the cabin windows, and rattling over the decks. Then all three grappled the man-of-war together, and the wild devils of Malays climbed on board like a swarm of ants.

The Englishman lost his chance of victory in that rush. He had fancied that it was impossible for wild, undisciplined Malays, poorly provided with fire-arms, to stand up against hearty, beef-fed sailors, well armed.

Inside of five minutes, attacked in front, flank and rear by merciless devils who gave no quarter, the bold Briton began to realize that in catching the Red Rajah he had caught a tartar. In ten minutes more, beaten down to the deck, and run through and through by the spear of a wild Dyak the imprudent captain breathed his last, and the Red Rajah had triumphed.

His victory had cost him dear. No quarter on either side was given or asked. The pistols of the corvette's crew had done terrible execution, and at least a hundred and fifty of the Malays were killed and wounded. But all of the Englishmen, without exception, were down, and the Rajah was alone in his glory.

He gave a few brief orders, and the merciless character of the man and his crew were fully exhibited in them.

All the killed and wounded, English and Malay, were coolly thrown overboard. The pirates could not be burdened with such trash, and so saved the expense of a surgeon. The Malay sea-rovers bear a strong resemblance, in their total disregard of human life, to the old Norse Berserkers and Vikings, who once tyrannized over all Northern Europe.

The Red Rajah himself was a typical sea-king. His lofty stature, his wonderful prowess in the fight, his long, wavy hair and long mustache made him look like one. His rich dress, glittering with jewels, was now all covered with blood from collar to hem. His feet waded in it ankle deep, and yet he was unwounded. The terrible piratical prince appeared to bear a charmed life.

While the obedient crew dragged the dead bodies to the open ports, to fling them overboard, the Rajah appeared to be considering something. He walked the quarter-deck of the sloop-of-war, casting an occasional glance up at her rigging. One of his own men was at the wheel, steering the collection of vessels, which were drifting seaward before the wind.

The chief of one of his war-boats came up to him, as he paced up and down.

"Great Rajah!" he said, hesitatingly, "far be it from me to disturb my lord; but the men report a steamer in sight, and after us."

As he spoke, the Rajah turned round and looked in the direction indicated by the other.

Not far from the coast of Papua, was a moving column of smoke, that indicated a steamer. She was coming toward them, most unmistakably.

The Rajah shook off his reverie. He turned, and addressed the captain:

"Tell the men to collect all the arms of the dead Englishmen. They must learn to use the weapons of the Christian dogs. Let all of my men go back to their prahus. We will carry away all the powder and shot of the Christians, and burn their ship before the steamer comes near us."

He went forward, and personally superintended the collection of the arms. The Red Rajah was obviously well acquainted with the merits of modern improvements in fire-arms, and capable of availing himself of them. The magazine of the corvette was rifled, and boxes of ammunition, most precious of prizes, transferred to the pirate war-boats.

All the guns of the corvette were dragged to the middle of the vessel, and pointed so as to direct their fire out of one broadside. Double charges, and three cannon balls apiece, were loaded into them, and the guns were primed.

Then the Rajah ordered all his men aboard their vessels, and remained alone in the corvette. The three war-boats cast off their grappling-irons, and went to leeward of the ship, awaiting the coming of the Rajah. The latter arranged a train of powder to communicate with all the guns in succession. Powder was plentiful. He scattered it thickly all over the deck among the guns; made little heaps of it on the cheeks of the carriages; and finally made a second train, leading down the open hatchway into the magazine below.

The pirates only took away the small arms, ammunition and a few casks of powder. What remained in the ship weighed several tons.

"If the Englishman doesn't sicken at *that* he'll be a stout fellow," said the Rajah, sardonically, as he surveyed the preparations. By his orders all the sails of the corvette had been lowered to the deck, the slings of the yards being cut. The corvette lay with her naked masts pointing to the sky, drifting in the current setting seaward. The Red Rajah took a last look astern. The steamer was in full sight, coming on at full speed. From her appearance he conjectured her to be French, although she carried no flag as yet. She was not more than a mile off now.

"Time for work," muttered the pirate. "Let us set the trap."

He picked up a musket, left leaning against the port, and examined it. A long, thin cord of Japanese silk twine was fastened to the trigger. The Rajah stepped to the side and waved his hand to the men in the war-boats. It could now be seen that two long cables were stretched, head and stern, from the corvette to two of the pirate craft. As he waved his hand, the men in the war-boats strained on the cables, so as to interpose the ship's hulk between them and the coming steamer. The Rajah stayed on board, training the guns carefully, so as to point low. When he saw that the steamer was still coming, head on to the ship, he blew his whistle, stepped to the side opposite, knelt down, placed the muzzle of the musket in a heap of loose powder, and cocked the piece.

A canoe was waiting for him under the ship's side, into which he leaped, and was rapidly rowed to the chief war-boat.

There he stood, on the roof of the poop-cabin, his eyes sternly fixed on the swiftly-advancing steamer, still holding in his hand the thin string that was to spring the trap to hurl so many souls into eternity. As the Red Rajah looked out on his enemies, all the softness was gone from his face. He resembled Lucifer, the fallen angel, defying the Almighty from the hell into which his crimes had flung him.

The crews of the war-boats strained on the cables, and carefully shielded themselves behind the hull of the corvette. The steamer, as if suspecting some trap, moved off in a wide circle, to bring her guns to bear. But the Red Rajah only laughed his own sardonic laugh, as he waved his hand to direct his vessels to the right.

"You may circle and circle," quoth the pirate chief, aloud, as he surveyed the enemy; "but 'ware the tiger's claws, if you come near!"

Suddenly he gave a violent start. Some one touched him on the arm.

He looked round, and, for the first time, became conscious that little Marguerite was on deck! There she was, close to him, her eyes fixed on his imploringly, and full of tears. The poor child was pale as death.

Old Marie was on her knees, still conning her rosary, and repeating Ave Marias as fast as she could say them. The old woman was nearly demented with terror.

In the overmastering excitement of the fight, the Rajah had forgotten all about them both!

"Grand Dieu, Marguerite!" he exclaimed, starting back; "why are you not below? Suppose you had been killed! Here, Ali! Hassan! Mohammed! How dare you leave this girl exposed to danger? Thousand devils! If she is hurt, I'll throw you all overboard, curse you!"

The men he addressed cowered before the savage glare of his eyes, but little Marguerite herself spoke.

"It was all my fault, my lord Rajah," she said, pleadingly. "I could not go below, though they asked me."

"You have done wrong, child," he said, sternly. "Suppose a stray shot had come your way?"

"And why not?" said Marguerite, sadly. "Oh, my lord Rajah! you have been so good and kind to poor Marguerite. Why should you be so cruel to others? There is yet time to flee without doing more murder. Spare those poor creatures coming up now!"

The Red Rajah looked at her with a peculiar smile.

"Would they spare *me?*" he asked, as he pointed, with a hand all covered with blood, at the advancing steamer. "What, think you, would be my fate if I let them come near me? What right have they in these seas, more than I? Be still, child! My life, and that of all those with me, hang on the destruction of yonder steamer."

"My lord," she said, clasping her hands, "you can escape. Your vessels are so swift, and the wind so strong, that you can escape, if you will. You have been so mighty in fight, that you can afford to lose the cheap triumph of a cold-blooded murder."

The Red Rajah started and frowned. He looked down upon the fragile figure of the girl, with a glance half-angry, half-scornful.

"Who are you?" he demanded. "How dare you preach to the Red Rajah on his own quarter-deck, with an enemy bearing down on him? Girl, go below!"

He pointed, imperiously, to the stairway of the cabin as he spoke, but Marguerite never stirred. The little creature looked up into his eyes, with a quiet courage astonishing in one so fragile.

"My lord," she said, and her voice quivered as she spoke, "you have been very kind to Marguerite. Grant her this one request. Spare those poor people, and fly."

The Rajah stared at her in amazement.

"Do you know who I am, girl?" he asked. "Look at this hand. Remember what you have seen. Remember my name, and then dare to ask the Red Rajah for mercy."

Marguerite made a step nearer to him.

"My lord Rajah," she said, quietly, "for the last time, I ask you to spare those people. See—I ask it on my knees. The demoiselle De Favannes begs their lives of you. The Red Rajah ought not to let a lady kneel in vain."

As she spoke she cast herself at his feet.

The Red Rajah looked down on her, not unkindly. She was very beautiful, as she knelt there pleading for mercy. He softly stroked her long, black curls, with a half-smile at her boldness, but his eye was cold and pitiless.

"I am very sorry, my child," he said, in his soft, deep voice; "but what you ask is impossible."

Marguerite rose to her feet, and confronted him again, with a strange light in her eyes.

"Enough!" she said. "You have shown me what I have to expect from you. Now, listen: You think you have me safe, and can refuse me as you please. Behold, then."

Before the pirate chief suspected her intention, the girl had sprung to the side of the vessel, and leaped on the low bulwarks. She stood there, with one little foot on the chase of a brass swivel-gun, the other on the bulwarks, suspended over the sea.

"Behold, my lord Rajah!" she cried. "There is the sea, and there are the sharks. You wish to keep me, but, on the faith of Marguerite de Favannes, if you do not cease your design, I will leap into the sea at once. Nay, not one step nearer, or you shall never see Marguerite again."

The Red Rajah turned deadly pale when he saw the frail girl suspended over the sea. The determination of her face showed that she was in grim earnest, and the sea was full of ravenous sharks.

"Come down, Marguerite," he faltered. "I promise—only come down."

As he spoke, he dropped the string in his hand, and held out his arms to rush toward her. The girl leaped down on deck, and the Rajah's vessel moved out at the wave of the chief's hand. The hawsers at either end of the corvette were dropped, and, as if by magic, the three war-boats were covered with sails in a moment.

The people of the steamer, seeing preparations for hasty flight, bore down at full speed on the corvette.

Then something unforeseen happened. Marguerite, happy in seeing that they were escaping, had forgotten all about the innocent-looking string that lay on the deck, fast running out over the bulwarks, as the swift war-boat skimmed away.

Suddenly she felt something catch in her foot, and found that it was entangled in a maze of twine. She had stepped on the end of the coils inadvertently!

A thin string, dripping with water, was seen to rise from the sea between the Rajah's war-boat and the corvette.

There was a flash, and the roar of twenty heavy guns, directed full on the steamer. Then a wider flash, a more tremendous roar, followed by the spectacle of the great ship become a volcano of fire and smoke, falling in a shower of burning fragments all over the steamer.

Overcome with horror, Marguerite sunk on her knees, while the Rajah pointed, with a triumphant sneer, to the disabled steamer. She was on fire in fifty places, and poor Marguerite was her unwitting destroyer.

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Overcome with horror, Marguerite sunk on her knees, while the Rajah pointed to the disabled steamer.

*The Malay pirates poison their krisses with pineapple juice. The kriss is a long dagger with a wavy serpentine double edge, peculiar to the Malays.

CHAPTER V.

THE WHALER.

The broad, beautiful sea was curled into glad ripples, all over its dark surface, when a young man, in a small canoe, out in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, suddenly uttered a glad cry, as he beheld a little white speck on the northern horizon.

The man was Claude Peyton, and he was all alone.

The little white speck, at first hardly visible on the blue line of the horizon, increased every moment in size, as the canoe sped blithely to meet it. At last it resolved itself into a square-rigged vessel—a small brig, close-hauled, standing west.

The canoe, going free, rapidly approached the other. First, the stranger's royals appeared above the sea. Then, bit by bit, topgallantsails and topsail became visible. At last, Peyton could see the fore-course slowly lifting, and it was soon followed by the checkered black and white hull of a regular old-fashioned brig.

The canoe was going like a race-horse, and rapidly closed in toward the brig. Within a quarter of a mile of her at last, the young adventurer was cheered by the knowledge that he was noticed. The brig backed her main-topsail, and lay to, waiting for him, while Peyton ran down on her quarter, and brought up alongside.

A round, red face, fringed with black whiskers, looked over the brig's quarter, and a rough voice hailed him.

"Boat ahoy! Who the Old Harry are you?"

Claude Peyton laughed aloud. He did not wonder at the question. His appearance was certainly quite peculiar. He had no clothes save a small kilt of Papuan manufacture. The savages had loaded him with bracelets and necklaces of beads, which he had neglected to take off, and his hair was frizzed out in regular Papuan style. In every thing but color, he might have been a perfect Fejee or Papuan.

The honest captain evidently took him for one at first. But his white skin, (now pretty well tanned), and the big brown beard he wore, more particularly puzzled the mariner.

Claude laughed aloud at the brusque question, but answered, plain enough, in English:

"I'm a white man, who has just escaped from the savages of New Guinea, by running off and stealing a canoe. Can I come aboard or not?"

"A white man! God bless me!" exclaimed the kind-hearted sailor. "Come aboard? Yes; certainly, by all means. Here, catch this rope. Eh! Mr. Jones! Mr. Edwards! Here's a white man, come all the way from New Guinea, in a savage canoe. Come on board, sir; come on board. Never heard of such a thing in my life. Why, you must have come over twelve hundred miles in that little cockle-shell."

Bustling about, and talking alternately to the young stranger and his mates, the captain used his best endeavors to help Peyton aboard.

His reception, as soon as they found what he was, was cordial beyond measure. Inside of half an hour he was seated at dinner with Captain Briggs, of the good brig Lively Sally, from London, on a whaling voyage. The captain supplied him with a suit of his own clothes, and the hands of the steward, who had formerly been a barber, it appeared, were busy with the scissors, clipping the luxuriant growth of frizzled hair from his head. No one would have recognized, in the bronzed but gentlemanly-looking young sailor, with close-cut hair and well-trimmed beard, the wild-looking savage who had come alongside in the morning.

"And now, my dear sir," said the polite captain, a fine specimen of the honest sailor; "I'm sorry, but, I'm afraid you'll have to cruise about with me after whales a bit, before you can get aboard a ship bound your way. You say you're fond of adventure; so I suppose you'll not object to whaling a bit."

"Not in the slightest," returned Claude; "I've always had a great desire to see a whale caught."

"Which you shall very soon, sir," said the captain. "But, tell me how you got into this part of the world, if not too bold."

"I started from America in my own yacht two years ago," replied Peyton. "We cruised all over the Pacific and Malaysia, but the yacht got strained a bit, in a typhoon, and I had to sell her at Syoney. A rich young fool, fresh from the mines, bought her for a big price, and I was left all alone in Syoney. I saw a French vessel in the harbor, which was going back to the Marquesas Islands, with stores for the French Governor there; and I took a fancy that I'd like to see those islands. They took me there, and I was bored to death. However, I didn't have long to stay there. A French frigate, called the *Philomele*, arrived at the islands, bearing orders to supersede the old Governor, and send him to Pondicherry. I was permitted to take passage with them, to which I owe the wreck on the Papuan coast, and my twelve months' captivity."

"Wonderful, upon my soul," remarked the captain; "but tell me—was any one taken prisoner with you?"

"Five of us escaped from the wreck," returned Peyton. "The captain and marquis I saw eaten with my own eyes. I was saved by the accident of having a sacred *taboo*-mark on my breast. But there is a mystery about the other two. They had got all ready to kill them, a sweet little girl, the Governor's daughter, and her old nurse. I tried to save the child, but they tore me away, when a lot of fellows in red, with guns, came up and began firing into the savages, and drove them away. The savages carried me off so quick that I could not tell if the child was killed or not. But if such a thing is possible, if the poor child is alive any where, I will hunt her out, if I have to cruise all over the Malay archipelago after the cursed pirates."

"Very good, indeed, sir," said Captain Briggs, absently.

Peyton saw that his thoughts were not by any means on the fate of pretty little Marguerite.

A hoarse shout from the mast-head, coming down the companionway, at this moment startled the captain with sudden excitement. He leaped to his feet, clapped his oil-skin hat on his head in an instant, and echoed the cry with his jolly old voice.

"THERE SHE BLOWS!"

It was the well-known signal of a school of whales in sight. Captain Briggs forgot politeness and every thing else in his eagerness, as he rushed up the stairs in a tremendous hurry.

"WHERE AWAY?" he yelled, as soon as his mouth cleared the companionway.

"Port bow, sir," replied the man at the mast-head.

Claude Peyton was already on deck behind the captain. His heart leaped with excitement as he looked to the windward, and beheld the whole sea all alive with little white spouts, and with huge whales leaping out of the water in unwieldy gambols, the spray glittering in the declining sun.

It was a large-sized school of whales, and the Lively Sally was within a quarter of a mile of them.

CHAPTER VI.

LEVIATHAN.

The expanse of ocean covered with spouting whales, the enormous size of the creatures themselves, seemed to Claude Peyton, when he came on deck, to preclude the possibility of successful attack by such puny creatures as man. Every now and then one of the monsters would leap right out of the water in play, showing a carcass that looked as large as the brig herself.

But the men were all merrily at work, laughing and joking, as they made their preparations to pursue their gigantic prey.

"Now, Mr. Peyton," cried jolly Captain Briggs, as the young man stood by the binnacle, watching the busy scene. "You said you'd like to see a sperm whale killed, and here's a big school of them right alee. D'ye want to come in my boat?"

"Thanks, captain," said Claude. "The very thing I would have asked, but feared to be in the way."

"No fear," said the captain, heartily. "You shall come. All you have to do is to sit still."

"Five minutes afterward the order was given to "lower away," and four whale-boats dropped simultaneously from the side of the Lively Sally, and pulled away at racing speed for the school, right toward the setting sun.

Claude sat in the stern of the captain's boat, and, being quite unemployed, was able to watch the whole chase, which he did with a keen pleasure amounting to intoxication.

Nearer and nearer comes the school of whales. Absorbed in their gambols with each other, they have not noticed the white whale-boats, almost invisible in the curling foam of the waves. The chief mate's boat has drawn ahead of the rest, and shoots on almost into the midst of the whales. Claude feels all the mad excitement of the race, and longs to pull an oar himself, to help on his own boat. The men in the chief mate's boat strain hard at the tough ash, and Claude sees the mate himself rising up in the bow, with the glittering harpoon in his hand. He holds it in both hands, point upward, close to the great black body of an enormous whale, that "breaches" within twenty feet of the boat.

Claude sees the huge head, as large as a small house, rush boldly out of the sea, the white water foaming and glittering as it rains off the immense mass. Then the mate casts the harpoon, with all his force, up in the air, the weapon describing a graceful curve, and plunging, point down, into the whale's side.

"Stern all!" yells the mate, as the unwieldy mass before him receives the stroke.

The great cachalot leaps clear out of the water as it feels the sting of the harpoon; and then, lashing the waters with its flukes till all the sea around is white with foam, down, down it goes into the dark bosom of the ocean.

And at the same instant, as if by magic, every whale of the school disappears.

The ocean is all alive for a few seconds with the "flukes" of the alarmed animals, hastily "peaked," as they all dive.

The boats toss their oars at the signal, and wait. Down, down, down goes the whale, with no signs of relaxation in speed. The captain's boat rows up hastily to the other's assistance, and the line of the second boat is quickly attached to eke out the first. The whale takes the whole of the first line and still "sounds" as rapidly as ever, till that, too, is nearly gone, and a *third* line is attached. The monster must have gone down in his first burst over two-thirds of a mile. The line runs out as rapidly as ever, and the whole transaction has not occupied two minutes yet. The third line runs out slower, and finally stops. The whale is coming up to breathe.

No one can tell when or where he will breach. All they can do is to wait. Presently there is a rushing sound under the water, a sound as of many huge bodies forcing their way. Claude Peyton sees the captain's red face turn pale as he looks over the side.

"Pull! pull, boys!" he fairly yells to the men, and oars are flashing in the sun as the boats pull desperately away from a common center.

But swifter than the light "cedars" is the rush of Leviathan, mad with rage and half blind, as he comes to the surface. Claude is conscious of a tremendous confusion; a roaring as of ten thousand bulls around the boat; the sea lashed into white foam by fifty leaping monsters; as the whole school of whales breaches together all around and among the boats.

The scene that followed beggars description. The loud bellowing or blowing of breaching whales, the sounding blows of the huge flukes on the crashing boats and water, the cries of the seamen, some drowning, others in dread of the sharks, were mingled with the hoarse orders shouted by the captain and mates. The sun was half-way below the horizon, and darkness was swiftly advancing to lend new horrors to the situation. There were only two boats left afloat, for the chief and the third mate's conveyances had disappeared. Claude had started to see a whale caught, and he seemed likely to be caught himself, instead.

But, as if satisfied with the discomfiture of their enemies, the whales now swam off, and left them to pick up their companions, just as the sun set. Only six of the last boat's crew were saved; and the captain, with much regret, gave the order to cut the harpoon-line, that was still attached to the first whale struck.

"Don't do it, captain!" cried the second mate, earnestly. "The devils have given us so much trouble, that we ought to have our revenge out of him. There's over four hundred barrels in that fellow, if there's a gallon."

"We can never do it, Coffin," answered the captain. "It's nigh dark now."

"Let me foller him alone, cap.," cried the undaunted Coffin. "He's fast to my boat. Don't let me lose him. I kinder hate ter let him go."

"As you will," answered Briggs. "But I'm afraid to let you go."

"Lord love you, cap., I'll fix him!" cried the mate. "Here, you extra fellers, get into cap.'s boat. Don't want no loafers here."

"Let me pull an oar!" suddenly cried Peyton; why he could not tell; "I've done nothing all day."

"Hurry up yer cakes, then," was the hasty reply, as the rescued seamen rapidly crowded into the captain's boat. A moment later, Peyton found himself at the stroke-oar of the mate's boat.

He had hardly taken his seat when the boat was pulled bows under by the whale, and dashed off into the twilight, at the rate of ten miles an hour. Peyton caught a hasty glimpse of the brig, about a quarter of a mile to leeward, and astern, beating up to rescue the overladen boat. Then he had to give his attention to bailing out the water that came curling in over the gunwale.

Mr. Coffin was a thoroughbred Nantucket whaler. No man of any other nationality would have dared to hold on to such an ugly customer as this whale had proved to be, with a dark night coming on. But Ezekiel Coffin couldn't see the point of losing an eight-thousand-dollar whale, for the sake of any danger, however appalling. And the natural love of soul-stirring excitement peculiar to the American temperament made Claude Peyton a volunteer in the hazardous feat they were about to attempt.

So the boat dashed off into the fast-gathering darkness, drawn at the end of a whale-line by the most powerful animal in existence.

Within an hour after dark they had pulled up, hand-over-hand, by means of the whale-line, close to the monster, which they could see plainly in the bright moonlight. It was all alone now. The drag on its powers, produced by towing the boat so many miles, had enabled its companions to leave it far behind, and the daring Coffin at once seized his lance, to strike the fatal blow.

The boat shoots through the white foam alongside of the great black body, closer, closer, and still closer. Peyton strains at his oar, wild with excitement. The end of their dangerous chase is coming at last. Human skill and courage are about to vanquish brute force. Now the boat's nose touches the whale. The keen lance-blade gleams in the moonlight for an instant. Then the powerful arm of the sailor drives it deep into the black side of the whale, and a great rush of red blood spouts forth.

"Starn all!" yells Coffin, and the oars flash in the water as the boat tries to escape from the rage of the monster. In vain. Stung by the wound, and wild for revenge, the mountain of flesh lashes around in all directions. The mighty mass of the forked flukes waves over the doomed boat for an instant. The next, it descends with all the force of a cannon-shot, and crushes boat and crew alike into a shapeless mass, buried in the water.

All but one. Peyton's life was saved as if by a miracle. Involuntarily he leaped from the boat, just before the terrible black flukes descended. Striking the water head-foremost, he went down into the depths ahead of the boat. The blow of the cachalot's tail crushed boat and crew to atoms. Peyton felt the shock of the blow transmitted to him under the surface and was almost stunned. Looking up through the dark waters, he saw the immense body of the whale moving off from the scene with great rapidity, between him aud the pale moonlight. The next minute he rose to the surface, panting for breath, and found himself all alone in the midst of the boundless Pacific.

Not a single soul of the boat's crew was to be seen. Entangled in the coils of the whale-line, and the wreck of the whale-boat, smashed out of all semblance of humanity, they were dragged along, senseless corpses, in the wake of the mighty bull-cachalot.

And Claude Peyton was left all alone, swimming for his life in the midst of the fathomless ocean.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 92.)

The Mustangers:

A TALE OF THE CROSS TIMBERS.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HORSE-TAMERS.

The sun leaped up with a bound, as it seemed, from the prairie to the east of the Cross Timbers, as Thornley and Wash Carrol woke up. Lebar was still sleeping, as the old hunter sat up and threw off his blanket with a loud yawn. The sound wakened the Creole, who started up on his elbow, with a wild, suspicious glance around, as if he was in fear of some one. Wash Carrol remarked it, and bluntly observed:

"What in thunder ails ye, Lebar? Ye look as skeered as ef ye'd seen a spook."

The Creole's glance fell beneath the hunter's eye, and he answered, with some confusion:

"Oh! nothing, nothing. Had a bad dream, and your noise startled me; that's all."

He rose from the ground as he spoke, and shook himself. Thornley was already up, and looking over the bars of the corral toward the captured herd of mustangs. The animals had recovered their strength and pride during the day's rest and food that had been accorded them. Wash Carrol had taken good care to pitch the corral where the richest grass abounded and where water was plentiful. It occupied the whole bottom of a little valley, surrounded with swells and mottes of timber, the swells crowned with the zigzag lines of the strong snake fence.

"Well, Wash," remarked the young Virginian; "the horses look well this morning. We shall have a job to tame them."

"Never you fear, younker," said the hunter, grinning; "this chile never seen the hoss as wouldn't cum down to the choke of a good larryet. Cum fellers, let's get our grub, and go to work. 'Tain't too much time as we've got ef we're to help the kurnel put up his—"

He stopped suddenly, as he caught the coal-black eyes of Lebar fixed on him.

"What! are you going to help him settle?" demanded the Creole, suspiciously. "Seems to me that we'll have enough to do to get our horses in hand to drive to the settlements, without helping other folks build shanties. They've got niggers enough to do all their work—haven't they?"

"Wal, yes," returned Carrol, indifferently; "but then, ye see, out in Tennessee, we allers hev kinder made up our minds to give him a lift. Who knows? Mebbe we must want his help if the Kumanch gits ugly, or Tiger Tail war to kick up a muss."

While the old hunter was talking, he was also eating a huge "hunk" of corn-bread and cold turkey. Ed Thornley had followed his example without any talking. The young man was too much occupied in thinking. The sweet face of Louisiana Dupre had been floating before his eyes all the night long in dreams, and it was the first thing in his thoughts that morning. So the breakfast proceeded in silence, for Lebar looked sulky, as usual, and Wash kept a keen eye on his face from some ill-defined suspicion that all was not right in that quarter.

"I say, Wash," said Thornley, sometime after, in a hesitating, nervous kind of manner, unusual with him; "don't you think that spotted mare would make a pretty lady's horse?"

They were standing by the rails of the corral as he spoke, Wash slowly gathering up the coils of a long rawhide rope in his hand, while he puffed at a short pipe. Lebar was some distance off, gathering together his implements of all kinds.

The old hunter turned round with a queer smile on his scarred face, and surveyed Thornley quizzically. The young man felt himself color, and tried to look indignant.

"So yer thar', are ye?" said Wash, with a sniff; "durned ef them wimmin ain't the devil and all. Dod rot my skin! but I don't blame ye, lad. That ar light-haired one, she air jest for all the world like a angel as I see'd painted in the church at El Paso wunst on a time. Yes, lad, that air spotty *would* make a thunderin' pretty hoss fur a gal to ride."

He ended with this unqualified assurance, and put his foot on one of the rails to climb over into the corral as he spoke. Thornley laid his hand on his arm. He spoke quickly, in a low voice, as Lebar came toward them.

"I say, Wash, pick out another horse, like a good fellow, and let's make each of the young ladies a present of one. I noticed they had none. I'll make it all right with you."

Wash nodded assent, but said nothing, for at that moment Lebar came up. Then the three mustangers climbed over into the corral, and commenced their task of taming.

Their equipments were of the simplest nature. Each man carried in his hand a long lasso of plaited rawhide, well greased, and exceedingly supple. All were equipped with Spanish spurs of portentous size, and three Mexican saddles lay on the ground, outside the gate of the corral. We say "gate," but it was nothing more than a panel of the fence, of which the bars took in and out.

Wash Carrol, as the most experienced hunter, took the lead.

"Here, Lebar," he said, "you ain't much with a larryett, you know. You'd better tend gate, I guess, till we git a kupple on 'em outside."

Lebar threw down his lasso indifferently.

"All right," he said, half-sulkily; "any thing to get through. It's less trouble, anyway."

When the two hunters advanced into the corral the scene was very interesting. The captured mustangs, which had been feeding about in the corral, every now and then smelling inquisitively at the fence, now, seeing the hunters approach, galloped off to the other side in great consternation. When they could get no further, they crowded up into a corner, backing up against the fence in deadly terror. Only the strength of the angles, reinforced as they were by strong posts, driven deep into the earth, enabled the barrier to withstand the pressure.

Wash Carrol walked leisurely toward the horses, parting the coils of the lariat in his hands. The noose, about six feet in diameter, trailed on the ground from his right hand, which held about half of the coiled rope.

The rest was in his left hand, the end being fastened to his waist.

"Now then, Ed," he said, his eye roving keenly over the various-colored herd; "you kin take spotty, ef you like. That ar buckskin's the hoss for my money."

They were within twenty feet of the crowded herd as he spoke; and, at the same instant, he threw back his right shoulder and then gave a forward swing of his whole body. The noose of the lariat flew through the air as it left his hand, the coils waving snake-like over the frightened, plunging mustangs. The next moment the circle of rawhide reached its destination, hovered a moment, and then descended with unerring aim over the neck of a beautiful cream-colored mare, with black mane and muzzle, known in Texas as a "buckskin."

Almost simultaneously, Thornley cast his own lasso with equal success, inclosing in its noose the white mare covered with black spots that had excited his admiration in the first instance.

Then commenced the task of bringing out the captives, at first sight apparently an impossibility, so closely were they wedged in with the rest. But the skill of the mustangers soon effected this. Their prizes, feeling the lasso and wild with terror, plunged desperately away to escape. Hardly exerting any strength the mustangers hung back on the lassoes, thus converting the flight of the mares into a circular motion. They wanted them to go to the gate, and they exerted what strain they did in an exactly opposite direction. Thus, thinking they were escaping, both mares plunged out of the crowd, galloping round in wide circles, and growing weaker and weaker under the strangling noose.

Once clear of the herd, by the same skillful management, they were got through the gate, outside the bars, their captors hanging back at a great angle and allowing themselves to be slowly dragged on by the choking steeds.

Once outside, they brought them to a halt, almost suffocated, and slowly began to pull up to them, hand over hand, through the now opened gate. As they passed through, the spotted mare trembled violently, and fell to the earth completely exhausted.

CHAPTER X.

TIGER TAIL'S WOOING.

The sound of axes, quickly plied, waked the echoes by the banks of the stream that ran by the Cross Timbers, as Colonel Magoffin and his little party went sturdily to work, to fell timber for their block-house. All the men of the party were fully employed, except Eugene Dupre, and even he, although not hard at work by any means, was pleasantly occupied, as he thought, in cleaning his double-barreled shot-gun, and talking nonsense to his fair cousin, Tennessee.

The young lady herself appeared not displeased at his presence, although she thought it necessary to protest, laughingly, against his waste of time.

"You'll rub the inside out of that gun, Eugene," she said. "You've polished at it ever since breakfast, and if we are to have turkey for dinner, it's high time you were off, sir. Louie, can't you persuade this troublesome brother of yours to leave us in peace? I want to go flower-hunting."

Eugene looked at his gun with great solicitude, but he could not detect a speck upon it. He rose with an air of resignation, saying:

"I wouldn't drive you off in that way, Tennie, if you bothered me ever so much. But you girls are all hard-hearted. You don't care how a fellow feels, not if he's pining away."

A light smile crossed the pale face of Louisiana Dupre!

"Don't talk nonsense, Genie," she said. "*You* have nothing to pine for. Go, like a dear good boy, to please me."

She ended with a sort of half-sigh, and Eugene's glance became soft and tender at once. He stroked his sister's dark locks quietly, and answered:

"I'll go, sis. Good-by. Don't fret; there's a dear, good sister. Good-by, Tennie. If I don't bring you a fat turkey for dinner, you may call me a bungler."

And he kissed his hand and turned away on his path to the river, whistling merrily as he went.

Louisiana looked after him sadly.

"Poor Genie!" she said. "He is so good and kind to me, and he's all I have in the world now since mamma died, and since poor Oscar—"

Tennie threw her arms around her cousin's neck, with impulsive affection.

"Don't talk of it, Louie," she murmured, fondly. "Poor fellow! he is happy in heaven now. Try to forget all those gloomy thoughts, which make you so miserable. He is far better off than we are, Louie. Remember that."

"I know it," said the girl, with a faint smile. "I always try to think of it that way. If I did not know how good he was, I should feel much worse. But oh! Tennie, I can't help sometimes thinking also of that black, horrible pool, and—"

The girl shuddered violently as the thought crossed her mind. Tennessee hugged her closely, and whispered:

"Try to forget it, Louie. Try to forget it. Let's go and gather flowers, and talk of something else."

Louie kissed her cousin gratefully, and wiped away a tear that had nearly fallen.

"You're a darling girl, Tennie," she said. "And I am foolish. I know it's wrong to pine so, but I'll try to do better. Come, let us go."

And she rose as she spoke, and passed her arm around Tennie's waist, to stroll off.

The two girls were in the midst of the camp at the time.

The colored women were clearing away the remnants of the breakfast, and the children were licking the plates. They could see the open meadows before them, and the forms of the colonel and Strother, superintending the hauling of logs down by the motte by the river-side.

Suddenly Tennessee started back, as they neared the edge of the camp, and uttered a faint cry of alarm. She clung close to her cousin, and both girls halted and gazed, spellbound.

Within ten feet of them, and seeming as if he had risen from the earth, stood a gayly-clad Indian chief, holding in his hand a long calumet or pipe, the stem adorned with feathers. The Indian stood there, with his glowing eyes, burning like live coals, fixed upon the blue orbs of Tennessee Magoffin, with an expression of admiration and longing that alarmed the girl, she knew not why.

How he had come there was a mystery easily solved. The wagons had been drawn up close to a large motte, and he must have come through under shelter of the trees. But, to the two girls his sudden appearance was appalling, and his looks increased their apprehension.

Not that he was ugly. On the contrary, he was remarkably handsome for an Indian—tall, lithe, graceful as Apollo, with magnificent eyes and long hair. His dress was in the extreme of Indian dandyism, and instead of the usual buffalo robe, he wore a mantle composed of the skins of jaguars, fringed with the tails of the same animals, from which he derived his name.

Tiger Tail—for it was he—enjoyed the sensation he had produced. The vanity of the vagabond Indian was tickled by the terror of his beholders. Tennessee was deadly pale, and her cousin, strange to say, showed far the most courage. She had seen more Indians in Louisiana than her cousin in Tennessee, where they were almost extinct.

"Don't seem to be frightened," she whispered. "He won't dare touch us while the men are in full sight. I will speak to him."

She accordingly addressed Tiger Tail in as firm a voice as she could command.

"Good-morning, chief," she said. "What will you have? We are always glad to see good Indians."

Tiger Tail slowly and lingeringly withdrew his eyes from the face of Tennessee, and looked at Louie. He waved his hand with great dignity, and answered, in broken English:

"Want whisky—ugh!"

"You can not have it," answered the girl, decidedly. "We have none, in the first place; and it is wicked to give it to Indians. It makes them mad."

Tiger Tail waved the pipe in his hand.

"Want see white chief," he said. "*He* give whisky. Tiger Tail great chief. Ugh!"

"The white chief is yonder, by the river," said Louie, quietly. "He has many guns with him. He loves good Indians, but he kills the bad ones. He will not give you any whisky."

Tiger Tail looked at her, with a glance that sent the red blood flooding all over her face and neck, and made her tremble.

Then he treated Tennie to a similar stare of unequivocal admiration and desire, till she lowered her eyes in very shame, and whispered:

"Louie! Louie! Let's scream and run! He frightens me to death. Perhaps he wants to kill us!"

The chief heard the remark, and smiled reassuringly, something as a wolf might. Handsome as he was, and not much over twenty years of age, there was a hardened, leering, insolent expression in his face hard to exaggerate.

"No kill pretty squaw," he said. "Tiger Tail come on peace. See. Hab no knife. Only pipe. All right."

And he lifted up his tiger-skin robe and displayed the belt of his hunting-shirt, innocent of weapons to all appearance, and

only containing a small pouch of tobacco, ornamented with beads.

"Tiger Tail great chief," he pursued, proudly. "Come see white chief, say welcome."

"I'm sure we're very much obliged to you, Mr. Tiger Tail," said Tennie Magoffin, speaking for the first time, and trying in vain to hide the tremor of her voice. "Won't you go down to the river, and see my father? He knows how to talk to gentlemen of your kind better than we do."

Tiger Tail gave another interesting leer at Tennie, and made a step nearer, immensely flattered at her evident terror.

"Tiger Tail love talk pretty white squaw," he said. "Hab many squaw home, None like white squaw."

Tennessee trembled and faltered again. She longed ineffably for some one to come near her, but the men on the river-bank were too busy to notice any thing, and she felt sick with fear under the Indian's evil glance.

Louie answered for her this time.

"Among our people," she said, bravely, "girls do not talk to strangers. If you want any thing to eat, we will give it to you. If not, go down to the river-bank. The colonel will talk to you there."

"No want not'ing to eat," said Tiger Tail, scornfully. "Got more than want to eat. Want gun, want powder, want blanket."

"Oh! Mr. Tiger Tail," said Tennessee, desperately; "they have ever so many guns down at the river-bank there. Go down and ask them, please. We haven't a single gun here. Indeed we haven't! Please, like a dear good Mr. Tiger Tail, do go down there. It's ever so much nicer than here."

Tiger Tail drew himself up with pride.

"Me go when me choose," he said. "Me want whisky."

And he stalked past them into the camp, where the negro women and children scattered before him, and stood looking on in panic and silence.

"Oh, Louie, what *shall* we do?" said Tennie, wringing her hands. "I daren't go, for fear he steals something; and he may have a number of his comrades hidden in the wood."

Louie, whose presence of mind never forsook her, called to a small negro boy who was standing near, and told him to run down to the river bank and tell the colonel that an Indian was in the camp.

Tiger Tail saw all, with his keen, roving eye, and the boy had not gone ten paces when the chief arose. He suddenly pulled from under his cloak a long lasso, which, as quick as a flash, he cast after the boy, the noose jerking him over on his back in a twinkling.

Then the chief shook his finger at the girls in a manner full of menace.

"No try dat again," said Tiger Tail. "Me know when me want to see white chief."

Tennessee turned paler than ever, and looked ready to faint.

Louie, also, for the first time, began to be seriously alarmed.

The chief's action looked as if he meant mischief, and what might have happened is uncertain, when the quick gallop of horses round the edge of the motte announced that strangers were approaching.

Tiger Tail's demeanor altered in a moment. He jerked the frightened boy to his feet, and loosened the lasso with a laugh, saying:

"Ho! ho! frighten pickaninny! No mean harm."

The next moment Wash Carrol and Thornley, each mounted on a handsome mustang, and leading another, came galloping up to the spot, full speed.

"I thunk so," ejaculated the hunter, looking at the Indian, with no favorable glance. "I thunk as how I knowed that hoss o' yourn, that you left standin' by the t'other side this hyar motte. What d'yer want hyar, *say?*"

Tiger Tail had assumed an expression of angelic innocence. He exhibited his pipe.

"Come smoke peace with white chief," he said, gravely.

"Then why don't yer git down thar?" asked Wash. "The kurnel ain't *hyar*—he's *thar*. You hain't no call to stick your ugly mug in *hyar*, talkin' to young ladies—*you* hain't! You *git!* That's what you do."

Tennessee, frightened to death as she had been, was still constrained to smile, as she viewed the change in Tiger Tail's demeanor. The lately insolent look was gone, and the chief moved off toward the river in a manner that strangely suggested slinking, holding his pipe before him, as a badge, to show his peaceful intention.

As soon as he was gone, Tennie Magoffin burst out into a profusion of thanks to the old hunter, and the two mustangers dismounted from their beasts.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TWO COUSINS.

"Oh, Mr. Carrol!" said impulsive Tennie; "how thankful I am that you came in time. Who knows what that wretch might have done before father could have got down to help us? Do you think he'll come again? His looks froze my very blood."

"Oh, no," said Wash, stoutly. "We'll take car' o' him now. Them Injuns is always durned brave when there's nout but wimmin critturs around. Yer seen how he wilted when we cum up. 'T'ar cur'ous to me why his band ain't round hyar. Ef they had 'a' be'n, ye mout 'a' had a wusser skeer. Thar goes the varmint now, a-talkin to the kurnel. Wagh! how I do despise his hull tribe!"

"Hadn't one of us better ride down there and warn the colonel how to treat him?" asked Ed Thornley, at this moment.

"Yer right, Ed. I'll go. Take keer o' the young ladies while I'm gone," said Wash, hurriedly. "'Twon't do to rile him *too* much."

And he threw the lariat of the beautiful "buckskin" mare to Thornley, and galloped off down toward the river side, where Tiger Tail was calmly approaching the colonel's party, all of whom had stopped work, and were eying the Indian with considerable distrust.

"Do you think there's any danger, sir?" inquired Tennie of Thornley, as soon as Wash had gone.

"Not at present, Miss Magoffin," he answered, only too glad of the opportunity to talk to these charming girls, but wishing it had been the dark one who had spoken. "While the chief saw only you two ladies, whom he did not fear, I make no doubt he was insolent; but an Indian respects strength, and he would not dare to attack you openly, in broad daylight, while all your men are well armed."

Tennie heaved a sigh of relief. Thornley did not tell her what he apprehended—that Tiger Tail might return by night, and try to obtain that by surprise which he might fail in by force. He turned the conversation by asking:

"And how do you like Texas, Miss Magoffin?"

"If you had asked me an hour ago, I should have said splendid, sir; but since that horrid Indian came, the charm seems to have departed. How shall we ever be safe from him, Mr. ——?"

"Thornley," said our hero, bowing; "Edward Thornley. Oh, well, your father is now building a block-house, and when that is finished, and provided with a good stockade, you need not fear all the Indians on the plains."

"But how long will it be before that?" asked Miss Dupre, speaking for the first time.

"The block-house ought to be defensible in two days," said Thornley, glad to address the object of his wishes. "Your father will probably move camp there tonight. This is no place for one. There is too much cover all round to conceal an enemy. Out yonder no one can get near without being seen. Still, I anticipate no danger, for you seem to be strong-handed."

Tennie Magoffin's cheerful disposition made this sober conversation irksome to her. She changed it by remarking:

"Mr. Thornley, what lovely horses you have there. So much prettier than those ugly mules you had yesterday. That cream-colored mare is a perfect beauty. I wonder if she would let me pat her?"

"Not quite yet, Miss Magoffin," said the mustanger, with a smile. "She was only tamed this morning and needs a little more discipline yet. But I am glad you like her for I believe my comrade intends her for you. The other is intended as a present for your cousin."

"And from whom, pray, Mr. Thornley?" demanded the girl, with a saucy twinkle of her blue eyes, which were quite sharp enough to see the state of the case.

Thornley colored deeply.

"From myself, if the young lady will accept it," he muttered, a strange bashfulness oppressing his usually open face. "We noticed that you had no horses, and Wash and I thought that possibly you would not think it a liberty—to—offer you—won't you take them?"

Tennie's eyes sparkled with fun. A merry girl always enjoys the distress of a modest lover, especially if he is some other girl's lover. Louie Dupre raised her dark eyes to Thornley's simply and gravely.

"I thank you very much, Mr. Thornley," she said, quietly. "It was very kind of you to think of us. But I fear we shall be robbing you, to take such beautiful horses. They must have cost considerable money, which you can not afford."

"No, I assure you," said Thornley, eagerly; "mustangs only fetch low prices now. Don't let that deter you. But they make beautiful ladies' horses. The spotted one will carry you like a bird. I'll give her one more lesson, and she will be ready for you to mount."

"Thank you," said Louie, simply, and there the matter ended, for, at that moment, Colonel Magoffin was seen approaching, at the head of his party of laborers, and accompanied by Tiger Tail. Wash Carrol rode alongside, and, when close by, dismounted and came up to Tennie Magoffin, with his best bow.

"Miss Tennie," said the old hunter, "me and my kumrad, we kinder thunk as how you and yer cousin hyar would like a kupple o' critters to ride. So we jest larryetted them ar mustangs for yer, an' giv' 'em a breakin', so 's ye mout hev 'em ef yer wanted. That ar buckskin's yourn, an' Spotty b'longs to Miss—Miss—yer cousin, thar."

"My name is Louisiana Dupre," said the young Creole, in her soft, somewhat melancholy voice; "and I thank you very much, Mr. Carrol."

"Oh! that ain't nothin'!" said Wash, indifferently; "we'll hev to give the critters another tamin' afore thur fit fur a lady to ride."

Here Colonel Magoffin came up with Tiger Tail, and passed them on his way to the camp. The Indian looked hopeful and expectant of something, with an expression of mild virtue on his face that would not have misbecome a hermit. Wash winked his eye comically, and put his tongue in his cheek, perfectly regardless of manners, as the chief passed. Tennie Magoffin smothered a laugh at the queer expression of his face, seamed as it was with the hideous scar. Tiger Tail heard the suppressed giggle, and turned but a single glance on Tennie. It was swift and instantly withdrawn, but the girl's face turned white at the malevolence of the look.

Wash waited till he had gone on, when he observed:

"Sneakin' cuss wanted whisky and powder. Curnel told him he wanted all his powder fur bad Injuns, and never drank whisky. Goin' ter give him a plug of baccer and a red blanket."

"But won't he want more?" suggested Thornley. "This camp's in a bad place, if he comes round at night, trying to steal."

"Goin' ter move arter dinner," said Wash, a little gruffly. "D'yer think I don't know nothin', Ed Thornley? Me and the curnel moves this arternoon, while you breaks the young ladies' hosses. Hyar comes Tiger Tail."

As he spoke, the chief reappeared from the side of the colonel's wagon, his face wreathed in smiles, carrying a bright scarlet blanket over his left arm, and holding in his right a huge black plug of navy tobacco. He passed by them, still smiling, and disappeared in the motte on the way to his horse. The colonel soon after came up and addressed Wash.

"I don't think that Indian is half as bad as he is painted, Wash. He seems to me to be a simple, good-natured soul. He looked tickled to death with his red blanket and his plug of tobacco."

"Pity yer didn't put a ounce o' arse-*nick* in it, durn him," growled Wash. "You are too innocent for the paraira, curnel. D'ye think that cuss cum arter that blanket and a bit o' baccer? Not by a doggoned sight! He cum ter *spy*, that's what *he* did; and ef yer don't look sharp, he'll be a-comin' hyar this very night ter see what he kin get in the way of pickin's."

"Say you so?" said Magoffin. "Then the sooner we move camp to an open place, the better, it seems to me."

"And that's what's the matter," quoth Wash, dryly.

CHAPTER XII.

A TURKEY-HUNTER.

When Eugene Dupre left the fire with his gun, he had made up his mind to bring home a couple of turkeys or a deer at the very least. The young man was an excellent shot, and had acquired some reputation among the bayous of his native State as a successful hunter. But he had never yet encountered a wild turkey in Texas, and was not aware of the extraordinary shyness of the bird. In Louisiana, when turkeys are met with, it is generally by surprise and at short range. In Texas it is necessary to decoy the old gobblers within gunshot by imitating the call of the female. Eugene had practiced this assiduously with the wing-bone of a turkey ingeniously manufactured for him by Mr. Strother, the overseer, who had been a mighty hunter in Tennessee, and whose second trip to Texas this was.

As the young Creole mounted his horse and rode down past the wood-cutters to the river-bank, old Strother cast a longing glance at him.

"Going after game, Eugene?" called out the colonel, who was superintending the hauling of logs to the block-house.

"Yes, sir," answered Eugene; "I saw a herd of deer over the river, through the glass this morning, and the turkeys are quite thick."

"I'm afraid you won't be able to get a turkey," said his uncle, smiling; "Strother tells me they're very shy round here."

"Indeed they are," said the overseer, earnestly. "'Tain't every feller as can pick up a turkey round here, colonel. I'd better go with Mr. Eugene or ye won't hev much for dinner, I reckon."

"Well, Strother," said the colonel, good-humoredly, "I guess we can spare you for a few hours. Don't go far, though."

"All right, colonel," said the overseer, eagerly; "I'll show Mr. Eugene how to do it, and we'll be safer together, in case any o' them pesky Injuns comes loafin' 'round."

Eugene was only too glad of Strother's assistance, for the latter was celebrated for his luck. The overseer mounted his horse, and the two forded the river below, with the water almost up to the saddle-bow.

On the other side the prairie was thickly studded with mottes of timber, but to all appearance entirely deserted. The deer and turkeys that Eugene had seen in the morning had all fled out of sight, as the two crossed the stream. Strother rode up to the nearest motte and dismounted. The two led their horses in under the shelter of an enormous live-oak, whose heavy drapery of Spanish moss swept the ground on every side, completely hiding them from view. Strother secured his horse, and Eugene followed his example.

"Now, Mr. Eugene," said the Tennesseean, "we'd better go through this hyar motte afoot, and keep still. Thar's turkeys about and not so fur off nuther, but ef they seen so much as the end of a ha'r, we mout as well go hum, fur we won't see a feather o' their'n."

He carefully looked to the cap of his long squirrel-rifle, and started off through the motte, bent nearly double, and stepping with extreme caution. Eugene followed with equal silence, and the two stole through the thick wood, parting the underbrush with their hands to avoid rustle. The wind was in their faces. Strother would never have crossed the river where he did, had it not been for that circumstance. He would have made a circuit of several miles first.

At last they arrived so close to the other side that they could see an open stretch of prairie extending for over a mile before another motte was encountered.

But this prairie was as empty of game as the other, and Eugene uttered an exclamation of disappointment. Strother, however, settled himself down with perfect resignation on a fallen log, and signed to his companion to do the same. A thick screen of bushes fringed the edge of the motte in front of them, and they could command a full view of the prairie.

Eugene obeyed, though not without hesitation.

"What's the use of sitting here, Strother?" he asked; "we can't see any thing."

"'Sh!" said the Tennessean, lifting his finger. "Hark to that!"

The two listened for some minutes without hearing any thing, and Eugene was growing impatient, when suddenly the faint, far-off "*Gobble, gobble, gobble!*" of a turkey broke on their ears. Eugene drew out his turkey-call in a minute, and would have answered, but Strother restrained him.

"See hyar, Mr. Eugene," said the overseer; "ef I stay with yer, I must boss this job. Ef yer answer *too* quick ye'll never git a gobbler hyar, in all creation. Let me do it, and I'll bring one up within twenty rods."

Eugene reluctantly consented to forego his skill. Strother prduced his own call, and uttered a single "*cluck!*" plaintive and shrill, in exact imitation of the cry of the female turkey.

It was almost instantly answered from *three* different quarters, and at various distances.

Eugene was delighted. He wanted to answer at once.

"Don't ye do it," said Strother, earnestly; "half o' you young fellers loses turkeys through cluckin' too much. Them gobblers is e'ena'most the cutest critters as runs. They know the difference in a minute. It stands to reason. S'pose a gal has three fellers courtin' her. She don't holler to 'em, 'Come hyar an' kiss me.' She kinder draws back and keeps still. She knows well enough that the fellers 'll come. All she's got to do is to keep still and let them git each other mad, like them fellers is a-doin' now."

As he spoke, he elevated his hand with a low laugh of satisfaction. All three of the old gobblers had begun again, and two of them were coming nearer, from the sound.

"Now some fellers," pursued Strother, tranquilly, "would go to cluckin' now. What 'ud be the consequence? Them gobblers 'ud stop and say 'That ain't no gal o' ourn,' and arter that you mout cluck till eternity. You wouldn't hyar another gobble, or see a feather."

"But, if you don't answer any more, won't they think the hen-turkey's gone?" asked Eugene, who was growing interested.

"Wait till they're gittin' tired o' gobblin'," said the overseer; "then we'll liven 'em up a bit. You jest listen."

They sat silently there for at least ten minutes more. Every now and then one of the old turkey-cocks would gobble, and the challenge would be answered by his companions or rivals, but the sound only approached very slowly.

At last Strother raised the call to his lips. and uttered a second "*cluck*," during an interval of silence. It was much lower than the first, but the effect was magical. All three of the strange birds burst into a chorus of excited gobbles, and then there was dead silence.

"Now thur a-leggin' it," said Strother, in a low tone, with a grim smile. "Shouldn't wonder ef ye see one soon. Git yer shootin'-iron ready, with heavy shot."

And he laid his own long rifle over his knees, ready for an emergency. Eugene looked out eagerly over the prairie, his gun ready cocked, expecting every moment to see the turkeys coming. The gobbles sounded from three different mottes to the right and left, and after an interval of full five minutes, a second chorus arose much nearer.

"Answer them, Strother! answer them!" whispered Eugene, excitedly.

"Not by a doggoned sight," said the overseer, philosophically. "'Twould spile all now. You keep still. Hi! Thur he are!"

As he spoke, the figure of a majestic-looking wild turkey, standing quite four feet high, as he stood erect, came proudly tripping forth from the motte on the right, about a quarter of a mile off, running, with his wings extended, out into the open prairie. Here he halted abruptly, and craned his neck on high, looking all round him, as if intensely suspicious. Presently he uttered a loud and sonorous "GOBBLE-GOBBLE-GOBBLE-GOBBLE!"

It was instantly answered from the opposite motte, and forth came running two more turkeys, as different in vigor and grace from the tame turkey as can well be imagined. They moved proudly forward, and each stopped on seeing his rival, and began to strut and gobble desperately.

In their anger with each other, they had almost forgotten the cause of their hurry; and they strutted toward the center of the open space, evidently bent on a fight. Strother waited for at least ten minutes more, during which the strutting and fuming gallants had approached within a few yards of each other, but just out of gunshot from the concealed hunters.

"You fire arter me," he whispered to Eugene. "We'll bag the hull caboodle then."

He raised the call to his lips, and gave forth the very faintest "*cluck*" imaginable.

But it was all-sufficient.

Down went every head, and, with extended wings, the three gobblers came tearing down full speed, racing to see who should be first to court the good graces of the concealed lady.

Strother lifted his rifle slowly.

Down came the turkeys within thirty paces, when they all halted.

Each inflated the scarlet wattles on throat and breast, and trailed his wings on the ground, while he spread his tail fan-like, and strutted round and round, gobbling loudly.

The Tennesseean's rifle cracked, and the left-hand turkey rolled over on the sod, with a little round hole over his heart. Bang! bang! almost at the same minute, went the double-barrel of Eugene Dupre; and the heavy swan-shot knocked the life out of the two others in an instant.

The young Creole was delighted with his success. He thanked Strother warmly for the lesson he had given him, and weighed his prizes with great admiration. The least of them weighed nearly thirty pounds!

By this time it was high noon, and both the hunters began to feel the proverbial appetite of their kind.

"I promised Tennie a turkey," said Eugene, joyfully, "and here I have been better than my word. We have enough to feed the whole camp. But I thank you all the same, Strother, as I should never have got one, I do believe, if you hadn't been along. Let's go home."

"Ay, ay! I'm thinking they'll want me this arternoon," said Strother. "Ef they spects to git up that block-house by to-morrow night, we'll hev to be pretty spry, I guess. Wal, Mr. Eugene, you go round the motte to the right, and I'll go to the left. We mout start up a deer atween us, or mebbe a b'ar. I'll carry your turkeys."

The young man was not sorry to be relieved of the heavy load, and was eager to prove his skill if possible, so he and the Herculean overseer took opposite paths around the motte to return to their horses.

Strother trudged along under near a hundred pounds of meat with but little discomfort. His object in going that way was more to reconnoiter the country than in the hope of flushing game, and he was not disappointed in not seeing any. When he had got back close to the horses he was startled by hearing the quick double report of Eugene's gun, und muttered:

"Durn the boy! Whar did he git sich luck?"

He quietly attached the turkeys to the rear of his saddle and awaited Eugene's reappearnce. Time passed, and still he came not. Strother grew uneasy as the minutes went on. He shouted twice, but no answer came.

Hastily loosening the revolver in his belt and cocking his rifle, he ran round the motte to where he had heard the gun.

No Eugene was there!

On the prairie lay the discharged gun, and close to it the tracks of horses' feet, leading off to the nearest motte. The tracks were plain, but nothing else was in sight save a little pool of blood close to the empty gun.

Strother groaned aloud.

(*To be continued—Commenced in No. 91.*)

Instinct without Brains.—Long ago it was ascertained by naturalists that worms and insects are without a brain, and yet they pursue a course of activity which borders on the domain of reason; so we are accustomed to say that they act from instinct, which is no explanation at all of phenomena in the highest orders of organic life which have their origin in the brain. If that organ is severely injured, so that its normal functions are no longer performed, consciousness and orderly manifestations of its influence are interrupted or suspended.

But the insect world swarms with beings of the most delicate construction, without hearts and without brains, whose movements and habits, independently of thousands of contingencies to which they are exposed, prove, in the most satisfactory manner, that their acts are a near approach to elements of a reasoning faculty, if they do not indicate reason itself. When the thread of a spider's web is broken, the little weaver examines the misfortune with extreme care, and then proceeds artistically to repair it. When a wandering fly becomes entangled in the net, the owner of the trap, lying patiently near by for game, indicates calculation in regard to the character and strength of the victim. Does it not strangely resemble reason when all its movements, under such an aspect of affairs, show, beyond a doubt, the spider considers the matter in all its relations before venturing to seize the prey? And yet spiders are without a brain.

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Our Arm-Chair.

Novel Reading.—That all people do not approve of the reading of fiction we are well aware; but, upon a careful canvass of their objections, we never yet have heard of what to us was a just excuse for their rejection of this class of mental food, for such it is—food of the most ethereal and delectable character, if the novel be good and pure. For, as President Porter, of Yale College, in his admirable treatise on "Books and Reading," says:

"No class of writers exercises so complete control over their readers as novelists do. This control reaches to their opinions and prejudices, if it does not insensibly control and reshape their entire philosophy of duty and of life. The fascination which they exercise becomes of itself a spell. No enchantment is so entire and delightful as that with which they invest the story which they recite. It is a very glamor which they pour not only over the scenes which they depict, but over the senses of the beholder. With this enchantment and fascination come the ready and even the forward acceptance of their practical philosophy, and even of their accidental prejudices. A favorite novelist becomes, for the time being, often more to his enamored and enchanted reader than preacher, teacher or friend, and indeed than the whole world besides, casting a spell over his judgments, molding his principles, forming his associations, and recasting his prejudices. The entranced and admiring reader runs to his favorite when he can snatch an hour from labor, society or sleep."

The President, being an educator in the broadest sense, sees in the novel a *power*, and he regards novel reading as not only heightening mental activity, but as very healthful and beneficent in its results, where the taste is schooled into correct channels.

"Brevity is the Soul," etc.—While many authors doubtless frown at us for the excisions we practice in their manuscripts, we feel sure their readers would say "thanks!" could they see and read the purely extraneous or immaterial matter which we had thrown out, or canceled. Young authors especially are prolix. They *talk* too much. The best story-tellers are those who are exceedingly cautious about never tasking the *patience* of a hearer, so the best of writers are careful not to *load* their narrative. The advice given in the homely verse:

"When writing an article for the press,
Whether prose or verse, just try
To utter your thoughts in the fewest words,
And let them be crispy and dry;
And when it is finished, and you suppose
It is done exactly brown,
Boil it down,"

is worth a great deal if authors only knew it. Wherefore, let some writers who possibly may have felt aggrieved at our "liberties" with their manuscripts, just recall the absolute necessity of every thing in our columns being in its best shape and they will spare their regrets.

"Touring for Ideas."—We hear of our contributor, Mr A. P. Morris, Jr., through the columns of the Washington city *Sunday Gazette*, which thus announces his presence at the Capital:

"A. P. MORRIS, JR.—Among the youngest of our acknowledged serial writers, and who, as an author, is well known in this and other communities, Mr. A. P Morris, Jr., is touring in search of food for another of his great local stories. Those who have read his "Black Crescent," "Hoodwinked," "Warning Arrow," etc., may anticipate a rare treat in a new romance from his pen, about to commence in the New York *Star Journal*."

We have one standing rule for procedure on the part of our authors, viz.:—to be perfectly familiar with their subject, true to character, and correct as to place. If Mr. Morris has made a study of Washington, he evidently means something!

WOMAN.

It has been said that the highest study of man is man, from which we would respectfully demur, substituting woman as a more elevated and complicated structure for our scrutiny. We know that man (even from other than a musical standpoint) is eventually *base*; whereas, woman is not; *ergo* she is higher; therefore, we will ignore the base man and consider the elevated woman. It is not without considerable diffidence that we consent to handle so delicate a subject as woman, but with an assumed and totally abnormal gentleness, plus kid gloves, we may be enabled rightly to deal with it. Father Adam was the first man compelled to deal with woman, and as illustrative of the impotency of inexperience, we behold him taking at very short notice a "bee-line" for the exterior of Paradise, and all mankind have to this day been perspiring in consequence of his exit.

Earning one's bread by the sweat of the brow may be a very good thing in theory, but it tells fearfully on pocket handkerchiefs. And, now that we have introduced the old gentleman, Adam, perhaps it would not be inappropriate to call attention to the fact that there were certain blessings attendant upon his estate and relationship with woman, that we have not possessed. For instance: Adam was never crossed in love—had no stern parents to conciliate, and no rivals occasioned him sleepless nights, with visions of coffee and pistols for two, at 5 A. M. (How such early rising would have annoyed him!) Courtship, with all its incidental trials and perplexities, must have constituted a part in the great curse—since Adam had none of them.

He escaped all those annoyances which school-boys have to endure. Adam never had the oil of birch externally applied, and if he was schooled at all, always stood at the head of his class, and took the highest prizes. We who have gone to school without knowing our lessons—we who have been riddled by the sharp condemnatory glances of the schoolmaster, and have felt the application of birch—we who have been unmercifully pummeled by some bigger boy, or snowballed into a jelly by antagonistic schoolmates—we, alone, are fully prepared to appreciate Adam's escape from those annoyances of youth, and to wish that we, too, might have passed over all this experience, and have been married as he was, without regard to choice, to the handsomest, best and most angelic woman living, (withal a little too fond of fruit.)

We started with woman as our subject, and have been discussing Adam. Excuse us, as we accidentally mistook him for an old woman.

As we take a retrospect of the past, we see the woman taking, in the main, a subordinate position, as second violinist in the family party, but, to-day, there is a "new departure"—she seeming to start off on a tangent from her accustomed orbit. No longer content to be a satelite, she aspires to be principal; while man, deprived of her accustomed light, feels more keenly each succeeding night of darkness.

QUERY: If, in the divine constitution of things, the moon was made to revolve around and give light to the earth, is it not, in its sphere, as exalted, as important, as worthy as the earth itself? And should it resolve to quit its known field of duty, its legitimate province, because its functions differ from those of the planet Earth?

A cobbler who does well his duty, is as worthy as the ablest statesman who does the same; but, lest this might convey the idea that we regard woman's position as essentially subordinate, we would assert that they are, in fact, fully the peers of men, simply differing from them in the character of natural functions, (as a poet from a historian, neither to be judged by the exact standard of the other.) In fact, if there is a distinction in intrinsic importance, let us yield the palm to woman, since the creature must be inferior to the creator, and most of men's minds have, in their plastic condition, received the impress of woman's hand, being largely molded into their after-existing shape by woman's influence, so that to her bias of them may be largely ascribed their after-greatness or weakness—in either case proving her superiority as molder of their characters and director of their destinies.

But, there are certain so-called "strong-minded women," (the strength of whose minds is weakness), who, styling themselves reformers, bother with their dogmas our legislators at Washington, and travel throughout the country proclaiming that man is a tyrant, and that from him must be wrested what they are pleased to denominate "woman's rights." Not only would these misrepresentatives of woman claim the elective franchise and attendant rights of office-holding, but, also, by insinuating themselves into and monopoly of the different avocations by which men obtain a living for themselves and families, would seek to dispose of him *in toto*, as a useless incumbrance.

We do not object to woman's entry into any respectable business, when it shall be necessary, and she can do so, but we do humbly believe that all men are not brutes, and that they still have a right to exist, "strong-minded women" to the contrary notwithstanding. In fact, we believe that men have, even now, some rights which women are in duty bound to respect; but, as the mighty do rule in this earth, and the weak are compelled, cheerfully, to submit to the crushing process of superior strength, so men begin to give way before the prowess of women, who, to-day, outnumber us, and who, being vastly our superiors mentally, are now attempting, and must soon succeed, in the usurpation of men's hitherto unquestioned right to govern.

As we, with vision clarified by knowledge of the recent past, look forward into the dim future, to predetermine the solution to the great problem of the age relative to the future of man, it is with heartfelt sorrow that we behold him, his mission accomplished, his destiny fulfilled, like the lone Indian, fast leaving the busy shores of time to become but as a creature of the past; for woman, in her soon-to-be twofold character, will, in obedience to the soon-to-be prevalent principle of social economy, have assumed the duties and functions of both sexes, leaving man, his occupation gone, but to leave this sphere of action in departure for his rest, before the advance of a superior civilization, accompanied by a superior race of beings, known as masculine women.

Such being the fiat of destiny, we trust most gracefully to submit, and shall at once humbly make our exit from the back door of human existence, that our triumphant weaker sex may find no obstacle to the possession of the domain from which we shrink away into oblivion as from the fenced exclusiveness of the boundaries of a new civilization.

It is useless for us to suggest that Adam was created *before* Eve—that his creation was characterized as the "crowning work" of all—that Eve was declared to be a "helpmeet" for him, and that the word help indicates subordination; for our champions of the "woman's rights" school would denominate such introduction of fact as old-fogyism, and answer it by a new cry for youthful ideas and our annihilation.

We too, then, if we would move in the popular current, must totally abnegate self, and, tossing high our cap in air, follow on in the wake of the ancient girl of the period, for it were better to die than to be out of fashion.

Surely, the times *are* sadly out of joint, and men have lost their reason.

W. P. B.

A MOVING ESSAY.

SOMETIMES, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for a family to pull up stakes and strike for other quarters.

We have just lived through such an experience. We moved. To the juvenile portion of the family it was the best fun in the world. A little while ago my youngest daughter said, very earnestly, "Mamma, don't you wish we could move *every day?*"

Mamma didn't wish we could. Being an orderly sort of person, with a bump of neatness in moderate development, mamma objects to such a general muss every day in the week.

And "muss" does not express the confusion which our belongings got into. I've heard of things being at "sixes and sevens," but I guess ours were at about "sixties and seventies."

Masculine arrangement carried the day at that time, and, with all due deference to my dear brethren, men do possess the grandest faculty in the world for turning things upside down. A woman would have managed that moving with an eye to the future whereabouts of things, but in a man's hands, (we don't intend to let our papa read this), the only object seemed to be to pitch things pell-mell out of our house, and hocus-pocus into another, and then leave the womenkind to straighten them up at their leisure.

Breakfast was hurried over very early, and things torn up generally to be ready for the dray. Mamma, trembling for her glass and china treasures in such ruthless hands, watched the first load drive off, and turned to prepare herself and baby to seek the new field of action.

Then it was discovered that the trunk containing baby's cloak and bonnet, had been carried off, and she must go wrapped up in somebody's shawl. Mamma charged them to have a stove up and a fire in it by the time baby came. When she got there, the stove had not even been brought over, and that blessed baby had to be left by a neighbor's fire.

Oh, what a scene of confusion awaited mamma's eyes as she entered her new home. Papa's old boots were peacefully reposing in a dainty, pink-lined work-basket; two hair brushes lay contentedly in a dinner-pot, and the big looking-glass, upon the floor, supported the flat-irons upon its polished face. Papa's best Sunday coat was rolled up and ignominiously tucked into a wash-boiler, and the fire-pans were in the box with the children's hats.

When dinner-time came, nobody could find the table cloth, but it came to light in a barrel of stove-pipe. And, oh, that stove-pipe! If papa did entirely lose patience and talk "Spanish" to that stove-pipe, it wasn't his fault, for it is exasperating when not a single joint will fit anywhere, and has to be pushed, and punched, and hammered, and squeezed, until neither pipe or patience are good for much—so papa wasn't to blame.

After half-a-day of hard labor, mamma sunk down, exhausted, upon a pile of carpets, and gave vent to her feelings, saying, "Oh, dear! we never shall get through! Thank goodness, one don't have to move often!"

But we did get through at last. Carpets were down, curtains up, windows clean and shiny, pictures hung and books arranged. Even the little cabinet-organ cosily standing in its own corner, with its white keys tempting one to drop work for pleasure.

Then the babies were tucked snugly in bed, and their elders sat down to enjoy a moment's rest in the new home. And that is how we moved.

M. D. B.

HYPOCRITES.

HE who writes a letter, and signs it "Yours truly," when he means any thing that may be found in the dictionary but that, practices a kind of harmless hypocrisy, since the formula is so mechanically used that no fault can well be attached to the act. If, however, your conscience smites you—and it will be very tender if it does—the ambiguous "Yours, etc.," will be preferable.

We would rank among "hypocrites" the following common characters, and hope, if any such read these remarks, they will not read in vain:

The man who becomes a member of the church merely because Jones and Smith are members, and because he thinks he is doing the right thing.

Wheedle, who is in the habit of questioning his clerk thus:

"Have you sanded the sugar, good Sandy, and watered the treacle with care? Have you smuggled the element into the brandy?"

"Yes, master."

"Then come in to prayer."

The man who, under the guise of friendship, learns your most important secrets, and then makes use of them against you.

Those who palm off as their own compositions some superior article which they have cribbed from a corner of some paper or magazine little known, because they have neither the ability nor inclination to do honest literary work.

The lady who presses Mr. Bore to stay to tea, when, in her heart, she wishes him on the other side of the Atlantic, or anywhere out of the way.

Ministers who have little brains, less energy, but plenty of laziness; who buy manufactured sermons, at a dollar a dozen, and then deliver them as original, by giving them from the pulpit. These characters, we are happy to say, are much less numerous here than in England. Our spirit of independence seems to put us more above such mean devices.

Lastly, there are some young writers who complain of the conduct of their friends. They pen a poem or an essay, which, in the first flush of fancy, is supposed to contain all imaginable beauties, or lucky hits of wit. They then hasten to one of those friends of theirs, and they—though at heart there must be a silent contempt for performance and performer—begin by telling him it is excellent, and end by flattering the green and gullible youth.

The editor, however, calls it *bosh*. Samuel Johnson would have called it "one of the sins of youth."

Do you not think that such judgments breathe more of the spirit of friendship than the opinion of the friend—or, rather, of the hypocrite—and will not the young literary aspirant take the hint, and show his productions to an acquaintance who will be "a friend in need and a friend in deed"—*i. e.*, in his criticism?

PENMANSWIFT.

Foolscap Papers.

An Evening with a Baby.

I AM the very soul and body of patience. I am patience on a monument himself; but I came mighty near getting out of that article last week. Jim, my nephew, and his wife were here on a visit; they brought the baby along—I am exceedingly sure *it* was here.

Well, one night, with my wife, they went to the opera, and left the baby asleep in his crib, telling me to keep an eye on it, and that it wouldn't disturb me, at least as long as it kept asleep. So I arranged myself for a quiet night by taking a volume of Mother Goose's Melodies and stretching myself out upon a lounge. There is a deep sublimity, a lofty lowliness, a wide contraction, an extended *briefness*, and a vigorous inertness in these poems which make them very interesting to peruse. I was reduced to tears over the terrible disappointment of Mother Hubbard's poetical dog, who failed to get the bone, but I confess myself puzzled over the dainty little lyric:

"Hey-diddle-diddle. the cat's in the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon;
The little dog laughed to see the sport,
And the cat ran away with the spoon."

I am very credulous, and generally believe every thing I read, as everybody should, but I studied quite a while to find how a cat could get in a fiddle, unless it fell off the bridge, and how a cow could leap over the moon, unless it was very low. I sighed over the sorrows of the old lady who resided in a shoe, with so many children the census-taker had to bring his dinner along when he wanted to take their names. This is the only book of Shakspeare's I ever read. I like it much, if not more. By-and-by I put a volume of late poems under my head and went to sleep immediately, but was straightway awakened from my innocent slumbers by a succession of screams. I patiently went and rocked the crib, but the more I rocked it the more it squalled. What should I do? There I was, alone with a savage baby, and with no one to protect me!

I patiently went to singing very sweetly the pretty little air, "By, oh, Baby," etc., but, either from a distaste for fine singing, or because it got worse frightened at my voice, or because it couldn't hear my voice at all, it only yelled louder.

I mustered up courage enough to take it out of its crib. Babies always were difficult things for me to handle; they have them muffled up in so many long robes that I never can tell whether I have them feet up or head down. I took it in my arms and walked patiently around the room, highly excited, the baby squalling worse than ever, when I discovered I carried it with its head down. I accordingly reversed it, but failed to make a reverse of the tune. I sat down and trotted it on my knees, gently at first, and as that had no soothing effect, I trotted it like wildfire. I laid it down in its crib because it kicked so I couldn't hold it any longer, and attempted to make faces at it, but it got hold of my hair. Oh, how it pulled! It wouldn't let go. I started to run away in my desperation, but the baby clung to my hair until I got to the door, when it let go, and I caught it in my hands and put it in its crib again, crying as ever. I sat down on a hot stove in despair, to try and imagine how such large yells could be produced by such a small baby; though, really, the mouth wasn't very small, for it was stretched almost completely over its head and seemed to extend down on the other side. The yells came with such force that, if it had been possessed of teeth, they would certainly have been knocked out.

I was getting mad. I felt there was a bitter hostility springing up between that baby and me. I deliberately walked up to that little bunch of flesh and noise and gave it a shaking, but that only had the effect of loosening the yells so that they came freer.

What was I to do? It was only nine o'clock, and its mother wouldn't be home till eleven. I held my ears. I tried to talk to it. I told it that it ought to be ashamed of itself. I gave it my watch, and then went to the other side of the room and picked it up, all smashed to pieces against the wall, it had been thrown so hard.

I went back, reversed the baby and spanked it like flailing wheat. It had something to cry for, and cry it did. A policeman came in to arrest me for trying to kill the baby; he couldn't stand it; he saw it was far from being dead, grabbed his ears, told me to kill it, and fled.

I remembered the bottle of Soothing Syrup. I emptied the whole of it down its throat, but that only smoothed its throat, and the yells came faster than ever.

I halloed Fire! Murder! and every thing else, but nobody heard me for the noise.

Hadn't we any thing in the house to quiet it? I went into the closet and got a box of bottles, and sat there pouring their contents down its throat—ague drops, laudanum, liniment, pepper-sauce, hair restorative, and every thing else; but these only unquieted it to an alarming degree. I tried to smother it under the pillows, but it wouldn't smother. My hair was on end. There was only one thing left for me to do. I decided to do it. I got my double-barreled shot-gun. I loaded it to the muzzles. I stepped back. I took good aim—but just then the folks came home.

Tell me, what are babies for? Was I ever one? Impossible!

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

☞ THE wise man changes his mind; the ignorant man will not. The former will acknowledge his error, and correct it, but the pertinacity with which the latter adheres to his opinions, always bear a just proportion to his ignorance.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—Book MS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked BOOK MS., and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "Book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy;" third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We can not, for various reasons, find place and space in our columns for the following sketches, essays, poems, etc.—this rejection by no means implying a want of merit in the several compositions, and authors may find market for them elsewhere: "Remorse;" "Sweet Heart of Mine;" "Poisoned Razor;" "Unfortunate Question;" "Peter's Last Party;" "Funeral at Sea;" "Poor Cline;" "A Man's Obstinacy;" "A Just Retribution."

The manuscripts by Laura K. D. we can not revise. Authors must not ask such services of an editor.

"A Great Mystery," we are inclined to say is *cribbed* from some English source.

We must say to Helen L. G. that translations, as a rule, are of no avail to us.

We can use "Carrie and I;" "The Ocean;" "Saved by a Hair;" "The Streets of Heaven;" "The Last Love Song;" "Oh, Power of Love;" "Keeping a Secret;" "Nine Points of Law;" "Who is Hit?" "The T. Weed Obitnary;" "A Laughing Grief;" "No, Sir!" "The Shop Girl's Shadow;" "Hearts for Sale," etc., etc.

OCEAN GIRL. Bathe your hands nightly with fresh cream; that will cure the "chaps."

JAMES A., Philadelphia. We shall not reprint the volume referred to.

T. C. H. The poems of Thomas Dunn English are only to be had by picking up a copy now and then, in the old book stalls. We saw a copy but a few days since.

D. S. O. "In the Web" ran through ten numbers. "The Flaming Talisman" will run through twelve numbers.—Captain J. F. C. Adams never wrote for any other paper. He writes only for this paper.

REV. JOHN T. E. The MS., "Travelers," we return as directed. Had stamps for its return been remitted with the MS. it would have spared us some bother.

CHARLES PETERS. The four largest churches are St. Peter's, Rome, St. Paul's, London, Westminster Abbey in London, and Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris—the first and last being Roman Catholic, the others Church of England. Thank you for your good opinion of the SATURDAY JOURNAL. *Help to circulate it.*

ELLERY G. Do not use such large MS. paper. It covers too much of the printer's "case," and is inconvenient. Commercial note is the best size for "copy" manuscript.

H. H. J. The late Henry J. Raymond has *no* "successor" in the *Times* newspaper. Such men have no successors to their talent and influence. Imagine a successor to Horace Greeley, in the *Tribune*, or to Henry Ward Beecher in Plymouth Pulpit.

KATE P. O. We have no "views" in regard to the new lady's paper of which you speak. The multitude of these "Fashion" papers would seem to equal every possible demand; but there may be room for a dozen more if we, as a people, continue to increase in our devotion to extravagance and folly.

MRS. PETER B., St. G. We believe the newspaper stories in regard to Queen Victoria's devotion to drink to be unfounded. It is the misfortune always, of people in exalted positions to be misrepresented and scandalized, and the British Queen is not an exception to the rule.

GEORGE SIMONSON. The work entitled, "The Limits of Religious Thought" was written by Henry L. Mansel, who, at the time of his death, was Dean of St. Paul's.

NELLIE VAUGHAN. The custom of ladies wearing pantaloons, under their riding habits, when enjoying equestrian exercise, is now becoming fashionable in America. The custom has prevailed for some years in England and France, and its superiority over the old style of skirts is admitted by all who have tried it. The skirts are liable to *bunch up* in riding, and the wind and a rapid gait frequently exhibit them, to the discomfort of the fair rider, while, with pantaloons, a lady is not made to feel awkward, and has a much firmer seat in the saddle, besides making the long skirt fit with more grace. We certainly would urge upon our fair *equestriennes* to "wear the breeches" in at least this particular.

LIBRARIAN. The following persons have been accused of the authorship of the blank-verse book known as *Amours Divines:* Theodore Tilton, Ingersoll Lockwood, and Col. Prentiss Ingraham. Who really wrote the book is not yet known.

EDWARD GRAY. Tobacco, saturated in warm water, and placed upon the pit of the stomach, is a good remedy for lock-jaw. It has been tried with success in a number of cases, and we know of nothing more efficient.

CHARLIE HENDRICK. You say that your name is the same as your father's, and write to know if you must write junior after your own cognomen, when your father dies? This is rather anticipative upon your part; but to answer the question, we will say that should your parent die, you then are no longer Charles Hendrick, jr.

DR. BENTON. There is quite a large settlement of Swedes in the State of Maine. The foreign settlers are short and stout in stature, possess florid faces, flaxen hair and small, light-blue eyes. Some of them still retain their national costume—the women wearing silk handkerchiefs tied over their heads, a dress with a straight skirt, having in it one or two tucks, a plain waist, and straight, tight sleeves, and a long, narrow apron; the men are dressed in long-tailed coats, piqued vests, and furbelowed pants, and the children of each sex dress as do their parents, and look antiquated enough. They still cling to the wooden shoe, with high heel and turned-up point.

GEORGE W. F. Corduroy pantaloons are used more for riding horseback than other kinds, because the sweat of the horse and spatter of mud will not stain them as in other clothes.

PHILOSOPHER. You ask what three events in one's life cause most thought? It has been said, and with truth, we believe, that Unsuccessful love-making, Disappointed ambition, and the Approach of Death, cause us to think more profoundly than upon other subjects.

MATTIE CLEBOURN. The Spanish, Mexican, Cuban and South American ladies generally, are given to smoking cigarettes: it is a fashion we are glad to know American ladies will not follow, and as great a vice in a woman as chewing tobacco is in a man.

ANNA LISLE. If you have a happy home in the country, stay there, and make yourself contented, for, by giving it up to come to New York, where you are unacquainted, simply because you like city life—and yet have never lived in a city, you add—you may bring trouble upon yourself. "Let well enough alone." Many is the country girl whose dream of the delights of city life has been dissipated by realities, so sad as to make one weep. A friendless girl in the city is as much out of place as a bird in a snare.

MASTER HENRY. By glancing at the *numbers* of the SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL, you can soon figure up its exact age. Unlike ladies, it is proud of its age, for, in the time that has gone by since its birth into the literary world, it has gained an enviable reputation, and for "one so young," has won hosts of friends.

MOLLIE CLYDE. We endeavor to answer all sensible questions asked us by our correspondents. When so many letters are constantly arriving, it is necessary to postpone the answers of some, for, "first come, first served" must be our motto with our correspondents. Those of our readers desiring any information upon subjects whereon we can be consulted, may rest assured that we will not slight them, if addressed in the proper style, and if they will have a little patience *their answers* will come in time.

SUSIE VORGLE. Any Broadway jeweler will reset your diamond for you, at a cost of from $15.00 to $30.00. Take it to a responsible firm, and you will have no fear of the diamond being changed for one of less value.

MORGAN SULIVAN. Gilded Perfume Stands are becoming fashionable gifts for gentlemen to give young ladies.

BETTIE R. There is no impropriety in your accepting the handsome fan, given to you by your cousin, as a *philapœna* present. You certainly know him sufficiently well to accept such a present from him.

OLD BACHELOR. Of course you can give the little daughter of your old college mate and friend a pony, with saddle and bridle. It is a gift that both she and her father will appreciate, and wherein lies the harm, we can not see, although you seem to think there may be.

☞ *Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.*

A PROSPECT OF HEAVEN.

BY GERALD SILVEY.

My head this pillow
  Long hath pressed,
Life-sapping sickness
  Alone my guest;
Yet ofttimes there stealeth
  To ease my heart's pain,
Beautiful music—
  A heavenly strain!

Beautiful music—
  Heavenly strain,
Softly cometh
  To cheer me again!
Sweet its assurance,
  For I know when I die,
Those harpings celestial
  Shall greet me on high.

My advent awaiting
  That sweet harp of old;
And with beauty unsullied,
  A crown of pure gold;
And in that bright city
  By the still Jasper Sea,
Among the pearl mansions
  There's a mansion for me.

Adria, the Adopted:

OR,

The Mystery of Ellesford Grange.

AN AMERICAN ROMANCE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,

AUTHOR OF "BRANDED," "SEA HARVEST," "NYMPHIA'S BRAVERY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

As Nelly Kent came slowly back to life and hope, a warm affection sprung up in her heart for the fair young girl who waited upon her tenderly as a daughter might do for a loved mother.

A day or two preceding the event which closed the last chapter, the two were together in Adria's little nook, which had been furnished with a few articles of comfort.

Fresh bedding, a chair or two, a bit of rich carpeting, looking strangely out of place amid its rough surroundings, necessary toilet utensils and a small hand-mirror, had been provided by Reginald. Nelly's presence had been kept scrupulously from his knowledge, as well as the range Adria enjoyed except during his visits.

Nelly was bolstered up in a comfortable position, and Adria, deft-handed as any lady's maid, loosed her mass of heavy, dark hair, which she proceeded to comb and brush very tenderly, that the invalid might not be wearied by the operation.

"How beautiful it is," she said, catching up the rippling, glossy lengths, and coiling them smoothly round the other's head. "Not a single gray thread! Why, you have a long life before you yet, dear Nelly, and I hope a happy one."

Nelly put up her hand, touching the silky mass.

"My sorrow should have turned it snow-white," she returned, sadly. "God keep you from ever knowing such."

Adria's eyes filled with tearful sympathy.

"I have often wished," she began, timidly, "that you would tell me of your former life. I do not wish to grieve you by recalling painful reminiscences, unless the knowledge of my loving interest should fit me to receive your confidence. Speaking freely of old wounds will sometimes take away the sharpest pain lingering in them."

Nelly bowed her face upon her hands for a time. There were anguished traces there when she raised it again, but she commanded her voice to a steady monotone.

"My story is a sad one," she said, "and I have striven vainly for years to efface my old existence from my memory. I would not have my sorrows dim a single hour of your young life; but, if it is your wish, you shall penetrate the mystery which left me so long in utter darkness, pierced now by a little ray of hope for future contentment, thank Heaven!"

Adria poured some wine into a goblet, placing it near her, and sat quietly down awaiting the elder woman's narrative.

"I was born in Italy," Nelly began. "My father was an Englishman, and an adventurer—my mother the daughter of a noble house. My father married her solely for the distinction and wealth he hoped to attain by means of the alliance. Judge, then, his disappointment when my grandfather—who had been always bitterly opposed to the match—cast off his favorite daughter, sending her and the man she had chosen out into the world, with his bitter curse and unforgiving enmity, to take their chance among the common herd.

"The marriage proved eminently unhappy. I think my parents both bitterly regretted the rash step they had taken. At one time they separated, my mother going back to her childhood's home, to crave the toleration which would not have been denied a stranger suffering as she was then. She was denied admittance! When she plead for but a moment's audience with the stern old man, his orders caused the door to be shut in her very face. But she had one friend beneath that roof. It was her maid, Juana, who stole forth and joined her lot with that of the outcast.

"My father received her, with her attendant, back beneath his protection—unwillingly, I have every reason to believe, but he dared not leave her shelterless in the streets. After my birth they bore with each other more patiently.

"He had been a strolling actor once, and when the means derived from the sale of my mother's jewelry and rich clothing had been utterly exhausted, he went back to the old profession.

"The life we led, as I can first remember it, was one of wretched poverty, unseasoned by any of the submission or cheerfulness which true love might have imparted. My mother died, and existence dragged on in the old way, except, as I grew older, my efforts contributed something toward the improvement of our circumstances.

"I had a good voice, in no way remarkable, and some dramatic ability. These procured me ready employment in secondary parts. When I was sixteen, my father was rendered helpless by a stage accident, and, after months of lingering torture, I shed tears which were almost joyful that he died. Do not think me unnatural in saying this. I had never given him much affection, but I am glad to remember that I proved myself a dutiful child. After his injury, his bodily agony had been so intense that he prayed hourly for death, and it came to him as a welcome release.

"I was then attached to an opera troupe, stationed at the time in Parma. A few months later we left that place for Modena, and from thence to the principal cities of Tuscany and Naples.

"During this time, a member of the company, Pedro Cardini, had been persecuting me with attentions, which, in my unprotected situation, I was powerless to resent, except by steadily refusing to encourage his love. He was both ardent and vindictive. One night he encountered me, unattended, on the street, and, walking by my side, urged his suit so persistently that I grew angry, and replied to him with some scornful words.

"He was enraged then, and threatened me until I grew frightened, and tried to escape him; but he seized my wrist, holding me fast.

"'Dare to love any other man,' he hissed in my ear, 'and I will follow you with my vengeance to the death!'

"I screamed then, loudly, for aid, and a gentleman passing came to my assistance—a foreign gentleman, with white, aristocratic face, and fair hair curling about his temples. He had a sad look in his great hazel eyes, but it faded out of them as he looked at me. He spoke a few sharp words to Pedro, and, when the fellow had slunk away, conducted me to the door of my lodging.

"After that I encountered him often, and learned to watch for his fair, handsome face among the multitude turned nightly toward the stage. To be brief, he wooed me with the love of an honorable man, and when he sailed for his American home, I accompanied him—his wife!

"My husband was Hugh Ellesford."

Adria started with a surprised exclamation, but quieted herself again to listen now with breathless interest. Nelly resumed:

"He was a proud, sensitive man, and reserved with all except me. During the first weeks of our married life, he told me of his former engagement. He had loved the lady dearly, he said, but not with the absorbing passion he felt for me, and he had long ceased to regret her lack of faith. He possessed her miniature, but gave it into my charge, telling me to destroy it if I choose. I kept it instead, studied it until I knew every line in her fair face, and rejoiced that my dark beauty far surpassed her unimpassioned style.

"I soon discovered that my husband shrunk from proclaiming to his friends the marriage which they would term a misalliance. I, too, remembering Pedro's threats, longed only for a secluded life with him, and my good Juana, who refused to be separated from me.

"Yielding to my urgent solicitations, after our landing, he procured me quiet country lodging, and went alone to his home, where he secretly prepared the arched chamber for my use. When all was in readiness, he took me there in the night-time, that prying eyes should not discover my presence.

"There my life was one long holiday, disturbed only by fears that Pedro's vengeance might find me ont.

"When my baby came, my winsome, wee boy, my cup of happiness was full. But, as he grew older, his father and I realized his need of unrestrained freedom, which he could not enjoy at the Grange. We sent him in charge of my faithful nurse to a small village on the Virginia coast. A few weeks later she came back alone, almost wild with grief over his death. My sorrow was extreme, but I had my idolized husband left me, and in time became reconciled to the loss of my boy.

"But my health now began to give way, and Hugh insisted upon my taking frequent trips to other sections. Such constant confinement to the house, relieved only by night rambles through the grounds, had brought on this evil, he said. I must take intervals when I could openly enjoy the light and sunny warmth necessary to my restoration. I yielded, as I always did to his wishes. Sometimes he accompanied me, but oftener I went alone.

"On one of these occasions I was haunted by a vague presentiment of pending ill. It weighed down upon me with increasing force, until, fearing I knew not what, I returned to the Grange a fortnight earlier than had been agreed at our parting.

"I came upon Juana unexpectedly. She was crouching on a low step, rocking herself back and forth, with a kind of wailing moan she always uttered when in distress. All my worst fears revived. I darted past her, expecting to find my husband dying, perhaps dead. She clutched at my garments trying to detain me, but I shook her off and fled toward the room which was his and mine. Voices in the private parlor stopped me there."

She paused, pale and agitated, but swallowing the wine Adria passed her, continued:

"I burst open the door and faced a scene I would rather have died than beheld.

"A woman reclined upon the sofa which was my favorite resting-place, and my husband, sitting by her, held her hand in his. I recognized her at a glance, though she had grown older and more careworn than the face the miniature portrayed.

"They both started up at my unexpected appearance. I can not dwell upon the agony of the moment. I think I shrieked out my curses upon them; I know there was murder in my heart as my eyes rested on her colorless face. I turned and fled lest my hands should do her harm, and even then I loved him so I would not for worlds have hurt the creature who had won his heart back from me.

"I remember nothing more distinctly until I found myself in a little New England village, destitute of support. Then I went to work in one of the cotton factories there, in preference to taking up my old theatrical life. There the papers brought me news of my husband's terrible death.

"I kept my first situation for five years. After that time changes were made at the Brankley mills. They changed ownership, and the new proprietors brought with them employees from their own locality, thus throwing many of the old Brankley hands out of work, myself among the number.

"I succeeded, however, in finding employment in a neighboring factory, but during my first week there met with the accident which disabled me for all future toil. I had communicated occasionally with my faithful Juana, and she now wrote imploring my return. So I left Crofton with the one friend Heaven raised up for me in my extremity."

"Crofton!" interrupted Adria, eagerly. "Was it Crofton where you worked during those years?"

"Yes. First with the Brankley's and afterward with the Russell Brothers!"

"The Russell Brothers!" echoed Adria. "Then you must have known him. Do you remember a young man in their employ—Kenneth Hastings?"

"He was the friend of whom I spoke, who lightened my dreary illness by his kind attentions, and under whose protection I traveled," Nelly said, her eyes misting with the grateful memory. "But how should you know of him?"

"He is my lover of whom I have told you," Adria answered, a happy glow upon her cheeks. "His generous kindness to you proves him worthy of the respect and regard I have meted him."

"May you never find yourself disappointed in him," said Nelly, fervently. "My sad experience has left me little faith in man's constancy, but he is a noble youth."

Adria's face held an inquiry which she refrained from uttering, lest it should probe her companion's sore memories too deeply; but reading her expression, Nelly said:

"You would ask me if I knew by what means Hugh Ellesford came to his untimely end. He found his death upon that night when I fled away from the Grange with brain on fire and heart chilled to ice; but of the manner, or by whom such awful retribution was wrought upon him, I am ignorant as you. I never tried to pierce the mystery. I never attempted to establish my claim as his wife; for myself I could not touch the wealth he left, but now that I know my boy lives it is my duty to restore him to his own.

"You have guessed that the man who guards us here is Pedro Cardini."

Then she related to Adria how she had been assured that her child lived after all these years she had mourned him dead.

After that, she drew from her bosom the jeweled locket, explaining:

"That night, in my mad anger, I tore it from my neck and dashed it at my husband's feet, declaring that I never wished to look upon his face again. But the morning when you so kindly received me at the Grange, I secured it from the secret nook where it had been placed. Now, that the rancor of my pain is gone, I can forgive him for his faithlessness, for I know I am true to his memory, as the other woman can not be. The faces are his and mine, painted ere we sailed from beautiful Italy."

She touched the spring of the locket, giving it opened to Adria.

The latter recognized Hugh Ellesford's likeness from a portrait at the Grange; but she lingered over the o her dark, glowing face depicted there. It was very unlike the wan, haggard countenance of the woman beside her, but another resemblance struck her with convincing force.

"I have seen another face almost its exact counterpart, nearly as a man's face can be like a woman's, and that other is Kenneth Hastings!"

CHAPTER XXII.

COLONEL TEMPLETON stepped quietly over the threshold, but Luke Peters, meeting him, read the silent anger in his face. All his sullen doggedness came up to aid him through this issue.

"I've not betrayed you, Colonel Templeton," he said. "I see you think it."

"How then could he trace her here?" the other asked.

Luke chuckled.

"He hired me to do the job an hour before you suggested it," he answered. "I found I could kill my 'two birds' with perfect ease, and you shouldn't be the man to blame me for doing it, Alan Templeton."

Colonel Templeton sunk his teeth in his lips to repress his angry utterance—it was a trick he had when greatly annoyed.

"How far has the young fool succeeded?" he asked.

"He's wrung a promise from her to marry him."

Colonel Templeton uttered an oath, and made as though he would have struck down his informant. Luke warded off the blow.

"Keep back your hand, Alan Templeton. You shall see that I have guarded your interests better than you think. I would have sought you to-night, but you have saved me that trouble."

"For what?" he asked. "You knew that my object was to separate those two."

"That you might induce Reginald to woo the Ellesford heiress, and thereby insure yourself of greater safety should time bring to light your share in the tragedy of 'lang syne?' Yes, I know. But your course would never have succeeded, and with your cooperation my plan can scarcely fail."

"Explain yourself," demanded Colonel Templeton; "and be sure you make it a plausible story, or you may wear a hempen collar ere long."

Luke's downcast eyes emitted a vindictive shaft of glittering light, and his fingers worked with convulsive twitching, as though they would have gladly choked out the life of this man who held him in his power.

"I've served you faithfully more than once," he said, sullenly, adding to himself: "But my own will dictated me then, as it does now!"

Then he disclosed his plans. Colonel Templeton, listening attentively, caught the intention, and when he left the mill it was to proceed directly to the Grange, where he held a long interview with Valeria.

That night a steady spring rain began to fall, but it did not deter Reginald Templeton from seeking the mill next day. He had come to urge the immediate consummation of the ceremony which would make Adria his beyond fear of man parting them.

She seemed to care little what her fate should be now, assuming a belief in Kenneth's falsity.

"Let it be to-night," Reginald said. "I don't wish to keep you in this desolate place, but I can not let you go until you are surely mine."

"I should like to be married in a church," Adria replied, wearily. "But it matters little; our vows will be but a mockery at best."

"It shall be as you wish," Reginald hastened to assure her, glad to propitiate her will in any way. "I will have a carriage near as it can approach here at nine to-night. The priest of the little village chapel is celebrated for tying clandestine knots. He will conform to my wishes and ask no questions. We will take the midnight train for Washington, and then, my love, my own, our true existence will begin."

After he left her, Adria wept some passionate, remorseful tears. Her pure nature shrunk from the deceit she was aiding, though it was her sole chance of safety.

He returned punctual to the appointed time. Adria came out of her little room to where he stood in the open body of the mill. A tallow candle pinned to the wall cast a flickering, uncertain light, which yet showed plainly her pale face and swollen eyes. She made one final appeal to his mercy. She was not acting now as she plead with him for the last time.

"Oh, Reginald, Reginald! It is not yet too late. Do not urge me to that act which I meant to commit to-night. For your sake and my own, relinquish your purpose while there is yet time."

"Adria, this is a mere waste of words."

"Oh, think!" she cried. "I do not love you, I never can. I belong to Kenneth, heart and soul. You will not be content with a simply dutiful wife."

"Once mine," he said, "I will make you love me so you will forever bless this hour."

She saw how useless it was to plead. Her voice grew calm and solemn.

"Reginald Templeton, do you take all the responsibility of the unhappy life you may bring upon yourself?"

He was vexed at her persistency.

"Once for all, Adria, Heaven itself could not tempt me to relinquish you."

She went back silently into the little room. Then he saw her emerge, her figure shrouded in the large, thick cloak which had been Nelly Kent's, the hood drawn forward concealing her face. At the instant, Peters, snuffing the single candle, extinguished it. Fortunately, he had already placed the lamp in his dark-lantern, and, opening a slide, threw the light on the way before them. His mission was to accompany them and give away the bride.

The rain was falling fast and steadily.

"The ice will break by to-morrow if this continues." Reginald addressed himself to the man who walked behind them, throwing the light of his dark-lantern on the pathway ahead.

Peters gazed uneasily through the thick darkness toward the river, and made some casual reply. The inclemency of the night made the girl shiver as she drew her wraps closer about her.

Over the sodden fields until they reached the carriage. The rain increased and beat against its closed windows, rendering conversation impracticable.

The priest in the little chapel sleepily awaited their coming. A penitent or two, by restless conscience driven here through the stormy night, knelt in the aisles.

The members of that strange bridal-party assumed their positions before the altar. The marriage solemnities were pronounced, and the two stood man and wife.

Reginald turned to salute his bride. She threw back the covering from her head and revealed the features, not of Adria, but Valeria.

Colonel Templeton stepped out from the shadow of the altar, with a sneering congratulation on his lips, but his words were checked by the tramp of heavy feet coming through the body of the church.

It was the town constable, with a squad of assistants under his command.

Before the inmates recovered from their first surprise, the official advanced, placing his hand firmly on the shoulder of Luke Peters.

"In the name of the Commonwealth, you are my prisoner!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 85.)

The Dark Secret:

OR,

The Mystery of Fontelle Hall.

BY COUSIN MAY CARLETON,

(MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.)

CHAPTER XIII.

UNMASKED.

Break, break, break!
  At the foot of thy crags, oh sea;
But the tender grac of a day that is dead
  Will never come back to me."
—TENNYSON.

ONE moment later, and the Honorable Captain Disbrowe would have been discovered, and the very thought made his heart throb and a sudden heat flush into his face in the shelter of his retreat. He could fancy the mingled scorn and angry surprise in the clear, bright eyes of Jacquetta, at beholding him there; and he would sooner have encountered a legion of ghosts, single-handed, at that moment, than the little gray-eyed girl he could lift with one hand. Even now he was hardly safe—for the door stood ajar, and he dared not touch it lest it should creak; he scarcely ventured to breathe, as he stood there, waiting for them to pass on.

But pass on they did not. To his dismay and consternation, Jacquetta came over and stood beside the window, looking out. The window was within a yard of his hiding-place, and her face was turned directly toward him—that face, so changed again, that he hardly knew it. Scorn, hatred, passion and loathing struggled for mastery there, and her eyes looked fierce and glittering in the serene moonlight. One small hand was tightly clenched, and her lips were compressed with a look of hard, bitter endurance.

Old Grizzle was speaking, as they entered, in a tone of jibing mockery.

"So you come here often, do you, Jacquetta?" she was saying. "It must be very pleasant for you all to be serenaded night after night in this way. Listen! a sweet strain that—was it not, Jacquetta?"

"May it deafen you forever, as you hear it!" said Jacquetta, fiercely.

"Nay, Jacquetta—that is hardly courteous. Let me see—how long since you and I stood here before, listening to this same weird music, in this same goblin room?"

Jacquetta made a passionate gesture, as if to silence her, but spoke not.

"You have not forgotten, my little dear, have you?" sneered Grizzle.

"Forgotten!" exclaimed Jacquetta, with passionate solemnity. "Oh, my God! is there a moment, sleeping or waking, night or day, that I can forget? Oh, for the waters of Lethe to wash from my memory the crimson stain of that day in my lost, darkened, ruined childhood. Oh, my blighted life! my seared heart! my crazed brain! Forgotten!"

She struck her clenched hand on her breast, and the dark, passionate solemnity of her face was awe-striking in the cold, pale moon-rays.

"Have I not striven to forget? Have I not tried night and day? Have I not resolutely steeled my heart, closed my brain, to every thing that could recall the terrible wrong done me in my childhood? *Childhood!* Why do I speak of it? I, who know not the meaning of the word—who never was a child—who, at the age of fourteen, when other children are thinking of their dolls and picture-books, was—"

"*What?*" said Grizzle, with a bitter sneer. "Why do you pause?"

"Before I knew the meaning of the word Memory," continued Jacquetta, her face white even to the lips, "I was happy. *You* know the sort of child I was—the happiest, merriest, giddiest fairy that ever danced in the moonlight. Oh, Grizzle Howlet! oh, woman with a fiend's heart! what had I done to you that this living death was to be mine?"

"Come, come, Jacquetta! this is going too far. Indeed, I think you ought to be grateful to me and your—"

"Name her not!" cried Jacquetta, fiercely, "if you do not want to arouse the demon that is within me—that you have seen aroused before now! Since I have learned what it is to remember, my whole life has been one continued effort to *forget!* I am not made of steel or stone, and I tell you to take care! for, as sure as Heaven hears us this night, a day of retribution will come, and I will be avenged!"

"Let it come!" said Grizzle, scornfully. "It is not such as you, Jack De Vere, will ever make me blanch."

"*You* know" said Jacquetta, with passionate vehemence, "the living lie I am! You know the mark I have to wear that others forged for me, and that I *must* wear till death releases me! Am I to be held accountable for the sins of others—for your crime and *hers*, whose name, if I mentioned, I should be tempted to curse? Will God judge me for what others have done? Woman, I tell you—No! At the great day, when He will come to judge the quick and dead, I will stand before his throne to accuse you!"

"And your—"

"Dare to name her!" almost screamed Jacquetta, with a fierce stamp of her foot, "and I will hunt the very dogs of Fontelle on you, to tear you limb from limb!"

"Come, my young madam!" said Grizzle, nowise intimidated, "enough of this ranting! I came for my little girl, and I must have her. You refused to give her to me out there, and I followed you here. Refuse to give her to me here, and I will follow you to your room, and take her by force!"

"*Your* little girl?" said Jacquetta, scornfully; "as well might a dove call a wolf mother. That child is nothing to you!"

"Isn't she?" said Grizzle, wi h a peculiar laugh. "Who do you suppose she is, then? I should hope she is as much to me as to you."

"I do not know who she is; if I did, she would not remain long with you. But I will discover, and free her from your fangs."

"Try, if you dare!" said Grizzle, defiantly. "Try it at your peril! It will be the darkest day that will ever dawn for you, Jacquetta De Vere, the day you discover who that child is!"

"For me?" said Jacquetta, bitterly. "Does a day ever rise for me that is not dark? Don't think I am afraid of you, Grizzle—that day has gone by. You have done your worst!"

"Have I?" said Grizzle. "That remains to be seen. I have not forgiven you for your jibes and taunts yet, nor for the scornful contempt with which you treated my son Christopher, when he did you the honor, and made a fool of himself, by loving you. Don't think I either forgive or forget so easily, my little lady. Did I not tell you once, a day would come when your own flinty heart would melt to quivering flesh? Have you ever read, in a certain nameless book, what it is to 'seethe a kid in its mother's milk'? Well, my fierce little eaglet, such a fate is in reserve for you."

"What a pity you ever left the stage, Grizzle!" said Jacquetta, with a smile of withering contempt. "You would be an honor to the profession yet. A speech like that would make your fortune!"

"I am on as tragic a stage just now, in real life, as ever I was in mimic one!" said Grizzle; "and as dark a tragedy is enacting. Do you think I am blind, dumb and besotted? Do you suppose I do not know what young girls are? I say, Jacquetta," she said, with a short, harsh laugh, "what a pleasant thing it is to have a handsome, dashing young officer in lonesome old Fontelle!"

A streak of dark red flashed across the face of Jacquetta, and then faded out, leaving her, even to the lips, of a more ashy paleness than before.

"Oh, the vanity of these puppets, who think they can outwit me!" said Grizzle. "I, who can read human hearts like open books. I tell you, Jack De Vere, I thanked God, for the first time in a score of years, when I heard who this young officer was, and where he was going. I left you to him from that moment; I left his hand to send the bolt that was to pierce your haughty heart! And that bolt has been sped; and you, in whom it is a crime to love, love him—the man who despises you! For—I tell you again—that proud young Englishman would not marry you to-morrow, if you would consent and he were free—which he is not. You know it; and now let you learn, in darkest despair, the lesson you taught my son—what it is to love in vain!"

"Your son?" said Jacquetta, with passionate scorn. "You do well to mention his name and love in the same breath. A great, stupid boor—a savage, remorseless cut-throat, a fit companion for the pirate, and slaver, and outlaw, Captain Nick Tempest. Oh, yes! wonderful love was his!"

"Take care how you talk of Captain Tempest, my dear," said Grizzle, with a sneer. "Don't say any thing against him until you know who he is. Did you ever hear any one say you looked like him, my red-haired beauty?"

"We did not come here to talk of Captain Tempest, did we?" said Jacquetta, with a gesture of angry impatience. "What do I care for him or you either?"

"Well, the day is at hand when you will care for both of us. That is one consolation. The day when this dashing soldier—this haughtiest of haughty De Veres—will learn who it is he has stooped to love—*what* it is who bears his proud name. His cousin, forsooth!"

And she laughed mockingly.

The white face of Jacquetta grew a shade whiter, and she drew a long, hard, quivering breath.

"Ah! you *can* feel—you *can* suffer! Good! Do you not fear I will tell this scornful lover of yours? For he does love you, Jacquetta, with all his heart and soul, and, what is more, believes in you—this man whom you are night and day deceiving!"

She did not speak. She clasped both hands over her heart as though it were breaking.

"Think how he would despise you—think how he would scorn you—think how he would loathe you, if he knew all! Oh, this glorious revenge of mine! Did I not do well to wait, Jacquetta? And my wait-

ing will soon be over, and the day will soon be here now."

Jacquetta turned from the window with a hard, mocking laugh.

"What if I forestall your communication, Grizzle? What if I tell him myself?"

"You would not dare to."

"Would I not? Wait till to-morrow, and you will see."

"You would not dare to. I repeat it! Bold as you are, you have not courage for that!"

"Courage! You are the first who ever accused me of a lack of that article. I have courage enough to face a hungry lion just now, or a more ferocious animal still, Grizzle Howlet!"

"Oh! I don't call you a coward! You would not be your father's daughter if you were that. And mind, I am not speaking of Mr. Robert De Vere now. But the courage that would make you face a raging lion is not strong enough to make you debase yourself in the eyes of the man you love!"

"You jump at conclusions too fast, Grizzle. In the first place, you have only your own surmise that I have been idiot enough to fall in love—and with him; and, secondly, it would not debase me in his eyes if he knew all this instant. There is no crime or disgrace connected with—none, at least, for me. The sin rests on your shoulders. I am only the sufferer."

"Why, then, is it so closely concealed? Why is it so completely hidden from him? Does not that very secrecy betoken guilt? Doubtless he has heard this same music that at present is charming us, and wondered at it. Perhaps he has even inquired what it meant."

"He has."

"And what did you tell him?"

"What do you think I told him? What was there for me to tell? I laughed at the notion!"

"And left the secret for me. Thank you, Jacquetta. Oh! for the day when all shall be revealed, and he will know the thing he has been loving!"

"Let it come!" said Jacquetta, striking her clenched hand on the window-sill. "What do I care? One thing is, you had better look to yourself if you do, lest Mr. De Vere should suddenly remember he is a magistrate, and you are a murderess!"

"I don't fear him, thanks to his haughty daughter, Augusta. I have her head under my heel, and can crush it when I please."

"You hold her by some imaginary power. Augusta De Vere would not stoop to commit a crime to save her life."

"That's as may be. My power over her is strong enough to keep me from all fears on that score; and however imaginary it may be, it is a terrible reality in your case."

"How do you know I will not turn informer? There are cells and chains enough in Green Creek to bind Grizzle Howlet, and rope enough to silence her poisonous tongue."

"I defy you! Before the rope could silence me, Augusta De Vere would be a corpse. Mind! I make no idle threat; but her secret once breathed, and she would not survive an hour."

"Better a speedy release from your tyranny than this slow eating away of life, you hideous vampire! She is fading away now like the waning moon; and before another year will be in her grave, and you will have a second murder to answer for!"

"That is my own look-out. It is nothing to you! And, in spite of all your vaunting, you have no more intention of doing it, than I have of strangling you this instant where you stand!"

"Better for me you would—oh, better, better for me you would!" cried Jacquetta, wringing her hands.

"I know that; but I am not idiot enough to forego my revenge in such fashion! When the time comes, you will fall from your shaking pedestal—be hurled back to the slime whence you emerged—a mark for the finger of scorn to point at. What will high-spirited, bold-hearted Jack De Vere do then?" said Grizzle, with a sardonic sneer.

"She can, like Cæsar, cover her face, and die with dignity, if need be. You may alienate one—him of whom you speak; but I will still have an honored home in Fontelle Hall."

"Will you? That remains to be seen! What would you say if I should tell you you would be cast out into scorn and contumely from their gates, despised and abhorred by all, from the master of Fontelle to the lowest menial in the kitchen?"

"I should call it what it is—a lie!"

"It is the truth, as you will find when the day comes. Oh, for that day! I will never see the sun rise till it dawns—that blessed day that will find you a beggared, disgraced, homeless outcast!"

"Do your worst. I defy you!"

"You will change your tune before long. Oh! you don't know Grizzle Howlet yet, I see, or the doom that is gathering over your head. Wait!"

"I intend to, and will brave you to your face when it comes!" said Jacquetta, with a short, mocking laugh.

"Yes, you may laugh now; but, in the end, let those laugh who win. You think now you could bear the disgrace; and perhaps, if Mr. De Vere and Augusta alone were concerned, you might; but this fine young stranger (ah, mention *him*, and you wince), how will you bear his scorn, and contempt, and hatred?—no, not hatred; for he will loathe you too much to stoop to hate!"

"Let him! He is nothing to me!"

"Very true—he is another's; yet you have given him your whole heart. And what has he given you in return?"

"His love!" said Jacquetta, with a bright, fierce flash of her eyes.

"Ah! he has told you so, and you believe him. Perhaps he believes it himself now; and if so, it is all the better, for it will make him loathe you all the more by-and-by."

"Speak no more of him. I will not listen," said Jacquetta, clasping both hands, with the same involuntary motion, over her heart.

"Oblige me by doing so a moment longer. What will Mr. De Vere say when he finds his pretty daughter, Jacquetta, has listened to this illicit love, and returned it; she, the—"

"Peace!" shrieked Jacquetta, with a frenzied stamp of her foot. "Do you want to drive me mad?"

"By no means! I should be very sorry for such a catastrophe, as it would defeat all my plans. And now, as you wish it, to change the subject. What do you think of this handsome Spanish boy, brought over by Captain Nick Tempest?"

"What I please."

"And what do you please to think, my dear young lady? Do be a little more communicative! Extremely handsome—is he not, *for a boy?*"

"So you say."

"But I want your opinion."

"You *will* want it, then."

"There is no danger of your falling in love with him, I trust," sneered Grizzle.

"I shall, if I choose."

"Not much danger of your choosing to do so, I fancy," said Grizzle, with a contemptuous laugh. "What does our handsome English cousin think of him?"

"Ask him."

"Perhaps I shall. I want to consult him also about Norma. Have you ever heard the name before, Jacquetta?"

"What would you give to know?"

"And be nothing the wiser," added Grizzle, with another low, sardonic laugh. "Short and sweet! I thought, perhaps, Captain Disbrowe might have mentioned the name in his declaration of love. It is rather an unusual one."

"Is it?"

"Ask Master Jacinto what he thinks of it."

"I shall leave that for you to do along with the rest."

"Very well. I am equal to a Spanish boy, or any other emergency. Singular, is it not, that he should risk his life for a complete stranger he never saw before?"

"You say so."

"And more singular still, that the Honorable Alfred Disbrowe should be stone-blind. What says the old song, Jacquetta? 'What will not woman when she loves!' Take care Captain Disbrowe is not jealous."

"Did you follow me here to moralize on love? How much longer am I to be kept here listening to this trash? Are you near done?"

"I am done for the present. I will go when you give me the child."

"Can you not wait until to-morrow. Is she to be taken from her bed at this hour of the night to start on such a cold, weary journey?"

"Yes. It will teach her a lesson, the young imp. I will learn her what it is to run away from home when I get hold of her!"

"Dare to touch her—lay but one finger roughly on her, and, as Heaven hears me, I will go to Green Creek that very hour and tell the world what you are, even if I should swing beside you!"

There was something so appallingly fierce in the young girl's tone, in her bright, glittering eyes, and colorless face, that it cowed for the first time the she-fiend before her; and muttering an inaudible something, she was silent.

"You know what I came here for—you know the errand I have so often to perform—that I must perform before I can return with you. Will you stay here, or do you choose to accompany me and look on your work?"

"No," said the woman, in a hoarse whisper. "Not in there—I can not go! I will stay here till you come back; but be quick."

With a look of scornful contempt, Jacquetta turned and left the room—passing in the direction whence the weird music still came. An instant after it ceased—not a sound was to be heard; the silence of the grave reigned through the lonely room.

Old Grizzle came over to the window where Jacquetta had stood and looked out, glancing now and then in something like fear in the direction the other had gone, and then shrinking closer toward the light. Before ten minutes had elapsed, Jacquetta's light, quick footstep was heard, and her voice broke the deep stillness, saying, coldly:

"I am ready—come now."

Grizzle followed her across the room. There was the sound of a key turning in a rusty lock, then the door was closed and locked again, and the next instant Captain Alfred Disbrowe was alone in the desolate room.

CHAPTER XIV.

PRIDE AND PASSION.

"I know not—I ask not
If guilt's in thy heart;
I but know that I love thee,
Whatever thou art."—MOORE.

WHAT Captain Disbrowe's feelings were while listening to the singular conversation in his hiding-place, may be, to use the handy old phrase, "easier imagined than described."

As he stepped out from his retreat, his face might have rivaled Jacquetta's own in its extreme pallor. And certainly he had heard enough to make him even as cold and marble-like as he was now.

To love Jack De Vere was bad enough; to love her while engaged to another was worse; to love her knowing her enveloped in some dark mystery of guilt or disgrace, worst of all.

And yet, strange perversity of passion, never had he loved her as he did at that moment. Standing there alone, his arms folded over his chest, motionless as a statue, her image rose before him "a dancing shape, an image gay," radiant with youth and health, and happiness, and beauty; bewildering, entrancing, intoxicating. There are some who never appear in full beauty until some strong passion of love, or hatred, or anger rouses them to new life, and Jacquetta was one of them. He had seen her in a new phase to-night, as she stood there with blazing eyes and scornful lips, her small, delicate figure drawn up to its full hight, a little living flame of fire, and never had she looked so really beautiful. He had seen her often in her gay, sparkling moods, and in her grave and angry ones, too; but this—this was something new.

So, nearly an hour he stood there so lost in thought, that he heeded not the flight of time. Jacquetta! Jacquetta! Jacquetta! was the cry of his heart still; and in that moment he felt as if he could have taken her in his arms and shielded her against all the world. One truth was thrilling through his whole being in fierce shocks of joy. He loved Jacquetta—Jacquetta loved him!

From his trance—a trance every unfortunate lover has fallen into more than once—he awoke, at last, to the hard reality of being very cold; and an unromantic vision of fevers, and agues, and rheumatic chills rising suddenly and unpleasantly before him, he turned to leave the uncomfortable old room. He paused a second to contemplate, with intense feelings of interest and curiosity, the doors, one at either end of the room—that toward the left being the one into which Jacquetta had passed to still the weird music; the other to the right being that which they had both entered last, and which he conjectured led to the inhabited parts of the house. Even had he desired to enter, he knew he could not, for Jacquetta had securely locked both; so, giving them a parting glance, he ran down the stone stairs and passed out of the aperture by which he had entered.

The hall-door remained as he had left it—proof positive that neither Jacquetta nor her companion had entered the house by its means. He softly locked it after him and then ascending the stairs, sought his room—not to sleep, but to pace up and down until morning should dawn.

Another sensation of wonder besides that relating to Jacquetta filled his mind. He had heard them mention Norma—what knew he of her? That both knew she had been his liege-lady while in England was evident; and that he felt convinced was the reason why Jacquetta had so scornfully and indignantly rejected him. What if he should give up this high-born *fiancee* of his?—what if he should offer to surrender wealth and rank, to brave the haughty anger of his relatives, and the scoffs and sneers of his aristocratic friends, all for her and love? Surely such a proof of devotion must awaken some return in her flinty breast; surely, then, he could conquer the conqueress, make the fierce young lioness crouch, cowed and tame, at his feet. But had he courage for such a sacrifice—was she worth it? Some day, and most probably soon, he would be Earl of Earnecliffe and Baron of Guilford; and did he not owe something to the world and his high position? And more, did he not owe a great deal to this lady betrothed of his at home? True, he remembered the engagement had been none of his making, but that of Earnecliffe's and the lady's father, who wished to see the family united; the former, because the lady was unexceptionable in beauty and family, and would have an immense dowry; and the latter, because he wished his daughter, who, with all her wealth, was simply Miss Macdonald, to have a title and be a countess. But he himself had given a tacit consent. He had acquiesced nonchalantly enough when his brother informed him of it, and proceeded to woo the young lady, then a romantic school-girl, in true orthodox, gentlemanly fashion. He was, as he said himself, a poor devil of a younger brother, with expensive tastes and habits, and slightly extravagant, if the truth must be told; and the income he derived from the earl was far inadequate to his expenses. True, he would be an earl himself some day, and one of the wealthiest peers of the realm; but as he could not live on that hope, and as Earnecliffe, though suffering from a disease liable to carry him off at any moment, might still see fit to live a dozen years, he must have something to live on in the mean time. And Norma Macdonald's fortune was just the thing—her ten thousand a year would supply him with spending-money comfortably, pay his debts, keep him in pale ale and kid gloves, buy him a yacht at Cowes, let him own a horse at the Derby, and keep a dashing four-in-hand in town. It was just the thing for him—couldn't do better if he was to try; which he was a great deal too indolent to do. So he closed with the offer and the lady at once.

It was rather a bore to be obliged to make love to her, to be sure—to fan her, and attend her to the opera, and turn over her music when she played; but these were necessary evils that every man had to suffer through, some time or other in his life, and he supposed he might as well make up his mind to be resigned, and begin at once. So he yawned, made himself fascinating, and set off to captivate Miss Norma Macdonald. And he succeeded to perfection. Miss Norma fell violently in love with him, then and there—as he came pretty near doing the same with her, too. Surpassingly beautiful she was—the most superb specimen of the superb sex he had ever seen, even then, although she was not more than fifteen years of age. Her beauty was of a rare and singular sort, with large, dark, lustrous eyes and golden hair, a snowy complexion, and the most perfect of hands and feet. Romantic and impulsive she was in the extreme, had read no end of novels, and was quite ready to love the first tolerably handsome young man who came in her way, from a duke to Jeames the footman. And Captain Disbrowe, the dashing, handsome, gallant young guardsman, was just the one to captivate a susceptible heart of fifteen. She had heard stories of his princely extravagance, of his wild deeds, and the thousand and one scrapes he was constantly getting into; but few young ladies are disposed to like a man the less for such a reputation. Norma Macdonald certainly was not. And never was a scapegrace better loved than was the handsome young officer by her. His feelings toward her were an odd mixture. He was proud of her, that was certain: he knew she would one day be a star of the first magnitude in the world of beauty and fashion; that he would be envied by every man of his acquaintance when she would enter society; that she would make a sensation when presented at court; and would be an unrivaled Lady Earnecliffe, and do the honors of Disbrowe Park entrancingly. And was not that enough? He liked her well enough; he must marry somebody, and she was just the thing, in every respect. She loved him, too, which was another consideration, although he knew very well she would have loved Tom Vane or Lord Austrey, his fast friends, just the same, if they had entered the list first. As it was, she loved him with her whole heart, and him only; and being a little grateful, and a good deal proud, he felt, on the whole, perfectly satisfied with the arrangement. He did not love her, to be sure; but though he had flirted from the age of eighteen, when he had taken moonlight rambles through old Fontelle with the daughter of his father's steward, he had never entertained a *grande passion* for anybody, and did not believe he was capable of it—did not desire any such thing, in fact; it would be such a bore to be violently in love! And so things were in this satisfactory state, and the course of true love was running as smoth as a mill-dam, when the young guardsman got a commission in a regiment ordered to Ireland, and led a gay life of it, for two or three years, alternately in that "beautiful city called Cork," and the capital of the Emerald Isle, while Miss Norma was inspiring her mind and kissing the miniature of her dashing lover within the consecrated walls of a fashionable boarding-school. Then he returned to England, to avoid the consequences of some tremendous scrape he had got into in Dublin, saw his *chere amie*, who had grown a thousand times more beautiful than ever, and twice as much in love, from constantly thinking of her absent truant. Miss Norma's papa, and the Honorable Alfred's brother wished the marriage to take place on the young lady's nineteenth birth-day; and the young lady and gentleman being willing enough, settlements were made, and every thing got ready for the important occasion. And meantime, by way of a change, Captain Disbrowe took it into his erratic head that a good way to kill time would be to visit America, and hunt up his mother's relatives, the De Veres—which he did to his cost, as the reader already knows.

All these things were passing in review through his mind, now. He had come, he had seen, and intended to conquer, and had been conquered instead, and by a little, gray-eyed, red-haired girl, ten degrees less beautiful than Norma Macdonald, who loved him, and whom he did not love—though that alone might account for it. He had been so long accustomed to easy conquests, that this defiant, free-and-easy Jersey witch provoked, piqued and interested him. Between being interested in a young lady and falling in love with her, there is but a step; and before the Honorable Alfred knew he had begun, he was already past praying for. That he *could* entertain a *grande passion* he found to his cost—that life without Jack De Vere would be a miserable affair, not worth having, he found, too. But whether she took the same view of the case with regard to him, he was at a loss to know. He would have given worlds to know how she discovered the secret of his engagement to Norma; for he was positive Earnecliffe had never told them, and he was equally positive that both she and old Grizzle Howlet knew of it. There was no accounting for it, except by the fact that one or both was a witch; and looking up at the smiling, mocking face on the wall, he felt half inclined to believe that Jacquetta *was* one.

What between pacing up and down his room for three mortal hours, and thinking with all his might, Captain Disbrowe succeeded in working himself up to a pretty high state of excitement at last. He was between the horns of a dilemma; he could not tell what to do. One moment, he resolved to cast wealth, and rank, and the world's opinion to the winds, and give up all for Jacquetta. The next, the terrible thought of "what will Mrs. Grundy say" staggered him; for though, in all probability, Captain Disbrowe had never heard of the lady, he dreaded her quite as much as you do, my dearest reader. How *could* he brave the anger of Lord Earnecliffe, and the haughty amaze and disdain of his wife, Lady Margaret, one of the proudest women he had ever known? If she were really a De Vere, which her looks and the strange conversation he had overheard seemed to contradict, she was his equal, at least, in birth; but how dare he—one of those mistakes of Nature, a younger brother—poor as a church-mouse, think for a moment of indulging in the luxury of marrying a penniless girl, simply because he was absurd enough to love her? Why, all London woul laugh at him; and there is nothing a true-born Briton can not stand, except being laghed at. And Norma—how was he to face her, when there was even a remote possibility of her dying of a broken heart, and a still greater possibility of her father, a regular Scotch fire-eater, following him over the world, from the Pyramids of Egypt to the wilds of New Jersey, to blow his brains out? And at that moment he half-wished some kind friend—Captain Tempest, for instance—would perform that act of mercy, if only to keep him from going distracted in his dilemma! There was another annoying little thought that would persist in intruding itself, too: if Jacquetta was not a De Vere, who was she? what was she? Like all the rest, it was a question easier asked than answered, and, like the rest, intensely disagreeable; but in the face of every thing, one conviction was ever uppermost—that he loved Jacquetta as he never had loved before—never could love again.

"If I were Ned Brown, of the Guards, with his eight thousand a year, I would marry her to-morrow," was his concluding exclamation. "What a deuce of a thing it is for a man to be tied up hand and foot, as I am, and not able to budge an inch to the right or left! Confound all aristocratic high and mighty relations, I say! and may the demon fly away with all match-making friends, forevermore! Amen. Oh, Jacquetta! I wish to Heaven I had tied a mill-stone to my neck and jumped into the Serpentine, the day I first took a notion to come to America. And I wish Miss Norma Macdonald and the noble earl of Earnecliffe were in—Coventry! I do!"

(*To be continued—commenced in No. 87.*)

The Flaming Talisman:

OR,

THE UNFULFILLED VOW.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "THE BLACK CRESCENT," "HOODWINKED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.—CONTINUED.

CECELIA was carried up, up, through an unlighted entry, into a back room in the third story, all the while lying unconscious, helpless in the hands of the huge African.

This apartment was destined to become a prison, and, in this instance, it would serve admirably. There was no carpet, no furniture save a rude straw couch in one corner, and a table at one side, on which was pen, ink and paper. The walls were paneled. At a hight of about eight feet was a small square window with the sash removed.

"This won't do," said Meg, as she struck a match and lighted a lamp. "This isn't the place for her. Better put her in the cellar."

"Never mind; it will answer for the present."

"But, hadn't we better put her in the cellar?" persisted the hag, whiningly.

"Cavil on't, now, and I'll drop what I hold," interrupted Nemil, frowning.

Meg Semper said no more. At a sign from Orle he deposited his burden on the straw couch, and then drew back as the two women bent over her.

"She's fainted," said Meg.

Orle was silent. She was gazing down into the fair face of her captive, while strange, fierce thoughts were chasing through her mind.

"Maybe she's dead," grunted Nemil, folding his brawny arms, drawing a deep breath and stepping further back.

For a brief space unbroken stillness reigned.

The hag sprinkled water in Cecilia's face, and when the latter showed signs of returning consciousness a cup of the cool beverage was placed to her lips.

"Come, now, wake up. Wake up, I say. Ha! you're coming to at last—well, now?"

Cecilia wearily opened her eyes and looked at the hideous countenance above her. Then she saw Orle; and, presently, a dark figure on the opposite side of the room, was included in her wandering, bewildered gaze.

"Where am I?"

"Oho! safe enough," yelped Meg, shrilly, her sharp tones echoing in the apartment like the scream of a bird.

"But, where—where?" as a picture of what had happened slowly burst upon her.

"In prison, my chick."

Orle spoke at this juncture.

"Imprisoned and in my power, Cecilia Bernard."

A low moan came from the helpless one.

"Prison? No, no; let me go from this! I never did you harm!"

"Ay, but you have," quickly rejoined Orle. "You love the man whom I love. In that you have sinned against me."

"Oh, Reginald! Reginald!" Cecilia buried her face in her hands, to shut out sight of those who, she felt, were resolved to do her ill.

"Look up," commanded the beauty; and she added to the African: "Wheel the table, Nemil."

He pushed the table close to the bedside.

"Look up! Look up!" screamed the hag. "Do you hear, eh? Devils aloose! she's going to faint again."

Cecilia had started to a sitting posture; her body was swaying, one hand was extended, waiving, as if a mist was before her.

But Meg Semper's shrill cry prevented the threatened swoon. Straightening herself up, she cried:

"Inhumans! what are you going to do with me? Do you propose to kill me, Orle Deice, because my love has been more valued than yours? Cowards!—three of you—and one a powerful man—to mock me, single, weak, helpless as I am! Speak your intentions. Sooner death than suspense like this Speak, demon in the form of beauty! Speak, vile woman; what are you going to do?"

A new dye crimsoned the brow of Orle Deice. It was not now the color of excitement, but a warm, weakening blush, occasioned by the cutting words of her rival.

"You shall see," she hissed, her dark orbs sparkling. "Get up; turn to this table."

"For what?"

"Do as I say," in a tone of fierce command.

Cecilia hesitated.

"Get up," snapped Meg.

"Ay, get up," growled Nemil.

Trembling, the girl obeyed. Awe, fear, an unnatural something made her comply.

"Now, what—what shall I do?" The inquiry was scarce audible.

"Take up the pen and write as I dictate," said Orle Deice, leaning over her.

"Well?"

"These words: *To Reginald Darnley—*"

"Ha! what would—"

"Obey me, girl," frowning, while Meg Semper scowled darkly.

"Yes—obey;" another growl from Nemil.

"Reginald Darnley," repeated Cecilia, as she wrote. "What next?"

"*I have been made aware of your intimacy with another—*"

"Well?" her hand trembling nervously.

"*And, as it seems you have proven false—*"

Cecilia dropped the pen.

"I will not write it!"

"You will."

"I say I will not," she cried, determinedly.

"Refuse, at your peril."

"Do your worst! He is not false! I will not pen such words!" and her resolution seemed to give her strength, for she started up and faced her captors with an air of defiance.

"I say you will." The voice was Meg Semper's, rustling in the quiet atmosphere of the room like a serpent's hiss, and the speaker slowly advanced, with her eyes fixed piercingly on Cecilia.

"No; I will not write it, though you rend me limb from limb."

"Yes, you will;" the hag drew nearer.

Nemil's face was blacker than a thundercloud. Orle Deice, as she now became a looker-on, watched the hideous contortions of the hag's face as she approached the defiant girl.

"You'll write it?—eh? Yes, you will—yes;" nearer she came.

"Never!"

"Choke you if you don't. I'll choke you;" a ferocious gleam in the flaming eyes and the talon-like fingers working convulsively.

"Do your worst."

"With a quick, sharp cry, Meg Semper leaped forward, and, in a second, Cecilia was strangling in the murderous clutch of those snaky fingers.

"You'll write it?—eh? You'll write?"

"Nev--urg-g-r! Never! Kil-g-ug--h-e-l-p! M-u-r-d-e-r!"

Hard and desperate struggled the frail form; loud that cry for help rung along the halls and entries of the large house, and Meg, uttering a savage oath, stopped the mouth of her weak victim, with one hand, while with the other she continued to strangle her.

Nemil looked stoically on. But Orle, unused to such scenes, bent forward, her lower jaw fell, her eyes fairly started; the fearful action of Meg Semper caused her heart to stand still.

"Don't kill her!" cried the beauty, gaspingly.

No answer. Tighter, tighter, that terrible hold. Cecilia's face purpled; the blue eyes were filming. Orle's bosom thrilled with horror as she saw the body relax, limply, in the hag's arms.

CHAPTER IX.

CREWLY SMELLS SOMETHING.

"Gird thee, and do thy watching well."
TUPPER.

HENRY WALDRON, after his parting with Cecilia, was gloomy enough as he walked slowly toward his rooms—gloomy, for a frown darkened his brow and his mind was perplexed with melancholy brooding.

Having graduated at one of our Northern colleges, Waldron had started on a tour through the Southern States, partly for enjoyment and partly in curiosity to familiarize himself with the scenes, centers, and general geographic map of the recent Rebellion.

While in the city of Richmond, he formed the acquaintance of a rather eccentric individual who roomed in the same house with him, and this acquaintance shortly ripened to a warm friendship.

Through this friend, he was introduced at the house of Lacy Bernard, and was at

once drawn toward Cecilia by that subtle, sweet attraction which

"——rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And man below, and saints above."

The attraction was intensified with the lapse of time, and soon his love grew to be a silent worship. Already had he deduced sufficient from her speech and action to know that she was not totally insensible to his passion, and, at last, he felt he had but to ask to receive.

How bright every thing seemed to him, when he reasoned that a declaration of his love was sure to meet with most favorable reception! He conjured, in imagination, a blissful future—dwelt in hallowed reveries upon glad scenes in which Cecilia pictured as his cherished wife.

But the crisis had come—had passed. Where, now, were those fond hopes, those gilded castles of joy which buoyant thought had built? All had faded. Refused, but loved. Oh! unaccountable mystery. He saw no explanation; and hence the gloomy aspect of his brow as he thoughtfully traversed the streets.

Reaching his rooms, he found his friend and room-mate walking to and fro in an excited manner, gesticulating wildly and addressing himself to a pillow propped up on the table, while, with frantic vehemence, he rattled off something like this:

"Yes, your honor—that an especially accumulated twelve, whose impartial consideration of prominent facts, evidences, affidavits and heterogeneous concomitants to undeniable statements whose authenticity is unquestionable, should, for the briefest particle of a moment, hesitate in arriving at a justifiable verdict of honorable acquittal, is, your honor, *I* say, astounding, sir—astounding? sir, it is ridiculous, unprecedented, and implies a glaring incompetency to decide at all in the present case, where it is clearly *proven*" (hitting the table a thump with his fist, the pillow toppled and fell, and, readjusting it with a savage jerk, he continued) "that my client's cow *has* no horns, and, therefore, demonstrates the impossibility of its having horned complainant's cook-maid! And, your honor—"

"Hello, Crewly, another case?" Waldron advanced suddenly, and broke into his practice of a speech.

Yes, it was Christopher Crewly—well known to many of our readers—and there, in one corner, stood the white umbrella, and on its handle was hung the worn silk hat.

The lawyer now wore a thin, faded linen duster, the sleeves of which were short, and the tail of which reached nearly to his heels.

Waldron's unceremonious entrance disconcerted him somewhat, but he replied with a nod, then restored the pillow to its place on the bed and resumed his excited walk to and fro across the apartment—mumbling incoherently about hornless cows, perjured cook-maids, belligerent clients, damages, acquittal, etc., etc., continually whisking over the leaves of a copy of "Blackstone," which he flourished spasmodically. Occasionally, his steel-gray eyes were raised in pious solemnity to the ceiling, as if dwelling with pathos on especial points, or committing passages to memory from the book.

Waldron was not disposed to interrupt him further. Throwing his hat carelessly aside, he seated himself at a window, through which came a light breeze that was refreshing to his heated forehead.

"Tink-a-link, link, link-a-link, link—" the dinner-bell sounded in the hall below.

There was a "slap," a "thud;" Blackstone fell to the floor, and Crewly puckered his lips and drew in a long breath, as if he scented the flavor of a tempting meal.

"Dinner!" he enunciated, briefly, looking at his young friend.

Waldron made no reply. He was gazing absently at a bed of roses beneath the window.

"I say—dinner!" repeated the lawyer, forcibly.

"I do not care to dine, Mr. Crewly."

"Pah! Get out! Who ever heard of such a thing? What—aren't you hungry? Sir, your digestion is out of order. Hear?—come on."

"Excuse me, Mr. Crewly."

Crewly looked at him blankly, as if he could not understand how a sane man could resist the temptation of a substantial repast; then, not caring to be last at table, he vented a contemptuous "umph!" and strode from the apartment.

When the lawyer returned, half an hour later, he found Waldron seated where he had left him.

"I say, you know you're hungry!"—in a high key.

"No, I am not."

"Wonderful! Well, I can't help you; bi carb. of soda do you good. (Picking up the book and resuming his study.) 'A cow without horns, to willfully horn a cook-maid, when'—I say, Harry, better go and eat some dinner!—'is preposterous, and if—'"

"What have you got hold of this time, Crewly?"

"Oh! why, that same fellow—rascal!—who—who brought a case up before, where a thief stole his wife's tea-kettle, and then struck *him* over the head with it—retaining prisoner till result of wound was ascertained. Recollect? Meet him, to-night, at T——'s restaurant. Hasn't feed me yet. Fat goose, though—plenty of feathers. Court won't decide—blockheads! Clear case. But, I'm off now. Better go down to dinner, you. Idea of a man refusing dinner!—hem!—bad sign. Try Drake's Plantation—but, good-by, now," and Crewly, slapping on his hat and grasping his umbrella, put Blackstone under his arm, and swung out of the room with those familiar, two-yard strides.

Christopher Crewly had an engagement with his client at eight o'clock that same evening.

Returning to supper, he found Waldron still in that careless, abstracted mood, and, for the first time, imagining that something had crossed his friend, he ventured a few questions in his own inimitable bluntness. But his inquiries met with no satisfactory reply, and then he began to wonder.

His wonderment, however, was an after-consideration, just then, and he started forth to fulfill his engagement.

Crewly was punctual—as he always made it a point to be in every thing—and pretty soon the party joined him. Over a friendly glass, they held a very satisfactory consultation.

The man had departed. Crewly was lingering yet, to "finish" the malt beverage he had ordered, when Reginald Darnley entered.

As the lawyer observed him, his brow knit.

"That's Reginald Darnley," he mused, inwardly. "Now, what's he doing here? Logic: not knowing, can't say. Report don't speak well of that young man. Loose habits, late hours, questionable associations, etc., etc. Know his father well. A nice old gentleman. Son isn't like him—not a diminutive bit. Plays cards, and all that. Something's the matter with him—*so*, drinks claret, and calls for it by the bottle. Bad sign—very bad!"

Involuntarily, the lawyer found himself deeply studying the young man.

As he watched, he marked that Reginald was extremely uneasy; saw his restless glances wander, anon, from the door to the clock, and again to the door.

Crewly shook his head. He thought it a bad case.

"What a fine old 'pop' he's got, too!" ruminatingly. "I wonder if he knows the dare-devil son he's supporting? Bad management in earlier youth—evidently, very bad. He's waiting for some one."

Presently Gerard Henricq came in. The clock indicated the hour of eight precisely.

As the young man started up to meet his supposed friend, the latter placed a finger to his lips in a way that said:

"Be careful."

This action struck Crewly as singular. He watched the pair curiously.

Reginald called a waiter.

"Room 8."

"Do not speak so loud," cautioned Henricq; and the two, locking arms, followed the waiter up-stairs.

As Darnley and the old man passed within a few feet of the lawyer, the first said, interrogatively:

"Gerard Henricq, you have arranged for me?"

"Yes, Mr. Darnley. But wait—prudence. One whisper might betray us. I must insist that you—" They were out of Crewly's hearing before the sentence was completed.

"One whisper might betray us," he repeated to himself, placing the handle of the umbrella to his lips and gazing fixedly at the floor. "Betray what, eh? Now, I wonder? Something's up. A conspiracy, no doubt. There's mischief afoot—bet my best hat on it. Room eight, he called for. Shall I? Guess I shall. Why not? Room six adjoins. Crewly, wake up—crawl, slip, jump! After 'em, now." Wheeling round, quick as thought, he summoned a waiter.

"Hurry up, now—rascal! Room six. Hear? Fly! Up you go. Tread on your heels, presently—shoot! Room six."

Rooms six and eight were connected by folding doors, which were closed and locked. A convenient key-hole pleased him as he caught sight of it."

"Liquor, sir?" The waiter lingered for an order.

"Nary liq. Get out, now; maybe I'll call you directly."

Dismissing the man, he locked himself in.

CHAPTER X.

THE HOT TRAIL.

"And now, whate'er thou art, thou unseen prompter
That in the secret chambers of my soul
Darkly abidest, and hast still rebuked
The soft, compunctuous weakness of mine heart,
I here surrender thee myself."—MILMAN.

WHEN Gerard Henricq and the young man were alone in their fancied security from eavesdroppers, the latter was first to speak; the quick, sharp intonation of voice betrayed how great was his impatience.

"Now tell me your plan."

"Directly," returned the old man, quietly. "First, seat yourself. Second, take my advice, and curb this impatience, which, unwarrantably, consumes you—it's bad, Mr. Darnley; it may thwart our project. Cool purposes alone can be carried out successfully; therefore, I say, keep cool. Drink some wine." He had ordered wine of the waiter, and Reginald, at the invitation, imbibed a heavy draught.

Gerard Henricq avoided the liquor, and as the young man set down his glass, he asked:

"Why don't *you* drink?"

"I never touch it."

"Well, proceed, now, quickly. What do you propose?"

"Easy, now," in a voice of tantalizing calmness. "Is your head cool?"

"Cool enough, sir. Will you come to the point?"

"Are you sure, Mr. Darnley, very sure, that you are equal to the task ahead? Have you braced your nerves? Is your determination strong as ever?"

"I am equal to it, and I am eager. I passed him on the street, after we parted, this morning, and he turned his gaze from me as he would from a—a— O—h! I am maddened! Tell me what to do, and how it may be done. I would have taken his life, to secure that which will keep the grim shadow of poverty from my heels!—since that meeting, I would do the deed in the strength of hatred! I hate him now!"

Those dark eyes, whose expression was so cunningly concealed behind the green spectacles, seemed given to strange, notable gleamings; for, again, as on former occasions, they lighted with a glitter like the orbs of a basilisk.

"Remember," said Henricq, in a hissing whisper; "you are about to—to—"

"Commit murder!" prompted Reginald, as the other hesitated; and his lips quivered. The old tremor of excitement was upon him.

"Yes, it is murder—in one sense of the word," continued the old man; "but, properly viewed, it is merely a blow to save your own life. Poverty, now-a-days, means, first, degradation; second, death. Charity is colder now, than at any time since the creation of the world; sympathy, even though it cost nothing, is scarce. People delight in loading a fallen man; and, though you be pure as the crystal of ice, calumny forever dogs the helpless. Do you see the truth of what I say?"

"Your plan? Your plan?" half interrupted his listener. "A truce to further prelude. We are wasting time."

"To business, then, at once. We must accomplish our design with poison." The low voice was even musical in its subtle cadence; the speaker leaned forward in his chair, and bent a deep glance upon the reddening face of his companion.

"Poison? Well," approved Reginald, as, with eyes riveted upon the carpet, and teeth hard set, he waited to hear further.

"Your father is in the habit of taking a goblet of ale every night before retiring—"

"How do you know that?" followed by a sharp, searching look.

"You told me so this morning."

"Did I? strange—I do not remember it."

"But you did."

"No matter. Go on."

"Am I not right?"

"Yes," and Reginald's gaze again fell to the floor.

"Now, Mr. Darnley, if you will contrive in some way to introduce the poison into the ale, *I* will guarantee that Mervin Darnley shall be dead within ten hours after drinking it—ha! did you hear that?"

The two plotters started to their feet. An unmistakable sound, resembling a half-smothered exclamation, had interrupted the old man's speech.

"It is nothing," said Henricq, when they had listened for a few seconds. "We were mistaken. Only fancy."

Reginald was not so easily persuaded that fancy had deceived them; but the room offered no place for concealment, and, presently, both resumed their seats.

"Do you think you can introduce the deadly drug into the ale?" inquired the oily voice.

"Yes. But where is it?—the poison."

"Here."

As a small phial passed between the two men, their eyes met. Those behind the spectacles fairly scintillated—but it was only for a moment.

With hand outstretched, Reginald paused. Something familiar struck him. He was motionless, gazing steadfast; and through his brain flashed the question:

"Where have I seen those eyes before?"

"Take it," pressed the old villain, imperceptibly ill at ease under the other's studying glance; "and mark: ten drops will be sufficient. Ten drops will burn out his life—ten drops are to give you back your inheritance. Can you remember?"

"Yes," tightly clasping the phial in his palm.

"You do not waver?"

"No," huskily; and he added, as if, for the first time, the enormity of his guilt rose before him: "God! what—what if I should be discovered!"

"Pah! nothing."

"The hangman!"

"I see—you waver, after all."

"No—I do not!" vehemently. "You shall see that my nerve is greater than you suppose. Ten drops. It shall be done this very night."

"Speed and surety," whispered Henricq. "But, as you've shown a weak spot, let me tell you, there is no danger at all. It will be impossible to trace the cause of death to poison. And, even if possible, why should you be suspected? Make yourself easy on that point. But, wait. It is better that you should be out of the city when the death occurs. I leave to-night, for Washington."

"I'll go with you."

"Sorry, but that can't be. I have company. Give the poison to-night, and by three o'clock to-morrow afternoon Mervin Darnley will have ceased to breathe. Then you can take the first morning train, and be well away. Will this suit?"

"Oh, yes."

"This is Tuesday. On Thursday evening, at eight o'clock, meet me at Wambole's saloon, Theater Row, Washington."

"I'll be there."

"We understand each other, now?"

"Perfectly."

"Your nerve—"

"Is of iron!"

"That's all, then. Remember, ten drops—no more, no less. Come, we'll go."

Together they left the apartment. On the street they separated, going in opposite directions.

Reginald was now resolved upon the fearful act contrived by Gerard Henricq; his breast turmoiled in a passion for revenge. The wrongs with which he deemed himself laden, had begun to weigh threefold under the cursed influence of one whose motives were heinous, though obscure; and with fierce meditation upon conjured injuries, and a feeling as of one unjustly oppressed, absorbing his heated thoughts, he hurried toward his late home, to consummate—the murder!"

Close on their heels, as they left the restaurant, came Christopher Crewly—his steel-gray eyes expanded, mouth agape, hat on the back of his head, and hands nervously swinging and twirling the white umbrella.

First after one, then after the other, he looked. He had been an attentive listener to their conversation; he had heard discussed the fearful plot in which Reginald Darnley, urged by the vile serpent, was to poison his father; and his had been the exclamation which startled the schemers.

Little did he dream that, in keeping the engagement with his client, he was to become cognizant of a prospective crime, the perpetration of which might, reasonably, shock even the most brutal among men.

His ever-alert brain was now being taxed for a plan to prevent the horrible deed, while it should leave him free to follow the old man, to learn more of such a mesmerising fiend, who would be the instigator of so foul, heartless and damning a murder.

While innumerable projects tumbled and tossed confusedly through his mind, without any decisive result, the objects of his alternate gaze were gradually moving away from him.

His eyes rested on a policeman standing on the opposite side of the street, and he was suddenly relieved of his perplexity by a brilliant idea.

Hurriedly he tore a slip from his diary, scribbled a few words upon it; then, like a swift-sped arrow, he flew across he cobbles.

"Here," he cried, to the officer, his voice so high-pitched that it broke in a squeak, "take this!—quick! Life and death! Mervin Darnley, corner of —— and —— streets. Know? He must have it right away! Poison! Life at stake! Lose no time! I'm a detective—see you all right. Shoot!" and, with the suddenness of a powder-flask he wheeled around and darted after Gerard Henricq, who was just then turning at the nearest corner.

Like a shadow, a specter carved from the surrounding gloom, he noiselessly dogged the footsteps of his "game."

"Leave the city to-night, eh? If you do, you do; but if you do, may I be—hanged for a cut-worm! First-class murder!—it is! Wholesale slaughter of an unsuspecting man! Rogues, both! Why, it's abominable! Fine case! Wait till I get you housed—rascal! Ten drops of the poison, eh? Dead in ten hours, eh? Yes—but it's exploded! Scoundrels! Chris. Crewly, L. L. D. Yours, forever, much—in spoiling dirty plots. Vagabond! Look out, now; I'm after you!"

Carefully avoiding the street-lamps and the glare of shop windows—at times walkinff in the middle of the street—he never once removed his eyes from the man ahead, and silently continued the pursuit.

Gerard Henricq led him a long, tedious route. When, at last, the former stopped, it was at the back basement entrance to the large house occupied by Orle Deice.

The old man here produced a key and swung open the door. As he did so, a faint cry came from the upper story.

Henricq paused. Crewly pricked his ears as he crouched behind a wagon that stood near.

A second later, Henricq disappeared.

"Deviltry afoot!" muttered the lawyer, now looking toward the upper windows. "So, he lives here? Good—I'll have him in jail before sunrise, and put a 'spider in *his* dumpling'! Wonder what that cry meant? *some*thing's wrong; bet my umbrella on it. But, I'm wasting time. Crewly—shoot! He was about to hasten away, when a light moved before one of the windows, and the shadows of several forms fell upon the thin curtains.

Instantly, he was riveted.

Those within the house were descending the stairs. When they had reached the second landing, (fortunately for Crewly's curiosity, the curtains of the window there were drawn back,) he saw two men and two women.

One of the women he made out to be an old hag; one of the men was an African. The hag carried the light; behind her came the African, and in the latter's arms was what appeared to be the form of an unconscious girl.

Crewly's mouth yawned; he stretched his neck, as if the movement would enable him to see more distinctly.

They neared the window. For one second the rays from the light were cast full upon the negro's burden.

The lawyer's knees bent, his mouth opened wider; the white umbrella fell from his grasp; his whole appearance was one of wonder, amazement, stupefaction.

He had recognized Cecilia Bernard!

CHAPTER XI.

THE KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

"Thou to whom the world unknown,
With all its shadowy shapes is shown;
Who seest appalled the unreal scene,
While fancy lifts the vail between."
—COLLINS.

"Oh, Hope! creator of a fairy heaven,
Manna of angels, rainbow of the heart."
—FAIRFIELD.

HENRY WALDRON sat alone in his comfortable rooms, smoking a cigar and thinking deeply. Through the window he gazed at the stars, as they came forth, one by one, and glistened in the mystic hues of a twilight sky; or, anon, he watched the blue vapor from his Havana, as it slowly ascended in the stilly atmosphere, as if in the smoky cloud was centered the picture of his meditations.

Night was stealing over the earth; enchanting murmurs vibrated gently on the hushed air; the slumbering day had gathered in its own gay voices, and Luna mellowed with her silver sheen the perfumed sleep of nature.

"In these deep solitudes * * * *
Where heavenly pensive contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing melancholy reigns."

He was dreaming, though awake, of Cecilia Bernard.

The more he thought upon the scene of the forenoon, the more inexplicable it became.

"She loves me," he mused, aloud; "she has told me that her heart is mine. Then, how account for her strange refusal of my offer? Not even an explanation. And must I relinquish her because of what has occurred? Such love as mine is not to be quenched by these, the first difficulties in my path? Is there not much in my favor? Some painful influence is upon her. She would willingly accede to my wishes, become my wife, were it not for—what? Ay, what? Would that I knew. Would that I could burst this agonizing barrier, and bear her proudly away. Can it be that she loves another—"

A knock at the door interrupted him.

"Come in," he said, absently.

A tidy colored girl entered, carrying a letter in her hand.

"Whar' is you, Mis'r Wal'ron?" She could not distinguish him in the darkness of the room.

"Here—what's this?" as she came forward and delivered the billet.

"A letter 'at jus' now's come," and she withdrew.

It was too dark to read, and, with a feeling of curiosity, he hastened to light the gas.

"From Lacy Bernard," recognizing the old gentleman's handwriting.

In a second, he had torn open the envelope; in another second he perused its contents, and, with a half-cry, half-exclamation, he crunched it in his hand and gazed vacantly, like one struck dumb.

The note was as follows:

"DEAR WALDRON:—Cecilia has disappeared. We are in great fear for her safety. Come to me. I would like to see you at once.
"LACY BERNARD."

In five minutes he was bounding down the stairs. On the street, he hailed a cab and ordered the driver to go full speed.

Upon arriving at Bernard's house, it was fully after dark; Reginald Darnley's cab was just then dashing away down the street.

Striding past the servant who opened the door, he entered the parlor, and found Mr. and Mrs. Bernard seated there, lamenting their loss.

"Waldron—Waldron, I'm glad you've come! This is terrible!"

"But, Mr. Bernard, in Heaven's name! explain. Your note was just sufficient to torture me. Do you know nothing at all of Cecilia? When did you see her last?"

"A negro came to the house, about two hours ago, with a written message of some kind. Who it was from, or what it was, I know not; but the girl who carried it to Cecilia says she has not seen my child since that moment."

"This is strange, indeed," commented Waldron, thoughtfully. "And is there nothing more—no clue whatever?"

"None," groaned the anxious parent.

Mrs. Bernard here left the room.

"But," suggested the young man, after seeming to deliberate for several moments, "why grow uneasy so soon? Cecilia may have gone out upon some little errand of her own. She may be, even now, hastening home."

It might be expected that the father would grasp at this thin straw of hope; but he did not.

"No," he moaned; "if it were so, she would have let us know she was going. I know my child too well, to think that she would cause us such uneasiness. She would not do it. And to be upon the streets, at night, alone?—no, no, Waldron."

"Let us have *some* hopes," he urged, though his own heart was sinking within him.

"Alas, I can find room for none. No—she is lost! lost! Oh! God! my child!—my poor Cecilia." He sunk back upon the sofa and sobbed as only a strong man can sob when he feels his very soul crushed by a mighty woe.

"Stop! do not say all hope is gone. Forbear, or you will drive me mad! Let us be strong together. Something, surely, can be done—"

"What? Oh! if you could but answer what. We are blindfold."

"But, I tell you, we shall find her!" cried the young man, desperately. "Move the earth, if need be! Not one trial shall be left undone. By Heaven! I begin to feel, myself, there has been some treachery!" He was excitedly pacing the room.

Cecilia was too dear to him to be lost. Despite her discouragements of his love, his affection for her was inflamed to such a degree by this occurrence, as to border close upon idolatry. If he had loved, he now felt that her presence was necessary to his existence. At thought of losing her, his brain fairly whirled in a blind dizziness; his frame was quivering in excitement. If treachery had enticed her away, if she—so pure and gentle—had enemies, and those enemies were now detaining her, then, not a house in all Richmond but what should open its doors to a search for the missing one.

When he had enforced a reasonable calmness upon himself, the two discussed various plans of procedure. But no way seemed clear; nothing offered a light to their gloomed agony of mind.

An hour had passed, when there came a pull at the door-bell—a pull so quick, jerking, savage, that it nigh sundered the wires.

The comer was Christopher Crewly.

The lawyer's sleeves were rolled up; his forehead was bathed in perspiration; his hat, so far on the back of his head that it threatened to fall off as he strode in, jostled and slipped with the spasmodic nodding of his thin head; he gesticulated frantically, flourished his umbrella, and seemed so out of breath as to render him incapable of speech.

Without a pause, however—sudden as a streak of light from behind a water-cloud—he darted forward and grasped Lacy Bernard by the arm, while the two men looked at him in astonishment.

"Bernard—your child!" he gasped, with an effort, his eyes fearfully distended in excitement.

"My child!" cried Bernard. "What of her?"

"Where is she, eh?" sharply, and panting the words.

"I do not know—gone! My God! I've lost her! I don't know where—"

"But *I* DO!" He nodded so emphatically that the hat slipped over his brow and half-closed his eyes, imparting a rather comical climax to his speech.

"I say I do!" he repeated, shoving the hat up and hitting it a terrific slap on the crown.

"What's that, Crewly?—speak, man—again. Quick!" Waldron was by his side. "You know where she is?—Cecilia!"

"Didn't I say so?" The reply so loud that it came near being a yell. "I know. Captured! Abducted!—no doubt of it! They've got her—"

"They! Who?"

"Don't know who—but I do know where. Isn't that enough? Come, now—jump? Fly! Shoot!—after her!"

The lawyer wheeled about, and started toward the door. For a second, Bernard and Waldron looked at each other; then they sprung forward after Crewly, whose coat-tail was just whisking out of sight at the front door.

"Tell Mrs. Bernard we've gone after Cecilia. Tell her to cheer up." Bernard addressed a domestic in the hall.

Christopher Crewly dashed on, and close behind him, with hearts palpitating in anxiety and hopefulness combined, hurried the lover and parent.

"Come on here, you!" exclaimed Crewly, as he found that he was distancing them.

At the nearest station the lawyer stopped to procure a search-warrant, (he was fond of doing things systematically,) and, their party increased by two policemen, they pressed forward again.

"Are you *sure* you know where she is, Mr. Crewly?" asked Bernard.

"Sure? Ever know me to tell a lie, sir? I'm just as sure of it, as I am that a horn without co—no, a cow without horns—can't horn a cook-maid. I may make you jump, when I tell you I've *seen* her."

"Seen her!"

"Yes, sir, seen her—s-e-e-n, *seen*! Now, hurry up, or they'll scalp her before we get there. What a wonderful night this has been. Poison!—ten drops! Leave town!—here, come this way," and he slid around a corner, his cranky body bent with the length of his strides, and the white umbrella rattled and thumped on the pavement at a fearful rate.

On went the rescuers, with Crewly in their lead. Pretty soon, the gloomy residence of Orle Deice loomed up before them, its grim exterior boding any thing but the comfort, luxury and wealth that reigned within.

"Here we are, and here's what we're after."

"Where," exclaimed Waldron, glancing about him expectantly.

"Jackass!—here; in this house. Quiet, now. Hang it! don't make a racket, or they'll scent a smell and shoot! There's a door at the back—one of you fellows go round there, and don't let 'em get out that way."

One of the policemen started for the back entrance, and Crewly ascended the steps.

"'Now, let the warrior waive his sword!'—we've got 'em—sure!—"

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud! went the ferule of his umbrella against the door-panel, and an ominous stillness ensued.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 90.)

(To be continued—commenced in No. 90.)

☞ THERE is a club in Paris consisting chiefly of rich merchants, formed for the purpose of enabling its members to witness public executions. This club has made an arrangement with the proprietor of a wine-shop in the Place de la Roquette, whose windows are immediately opposite to the spot where the guillotine is erected. Whenever an execution is to take place, the members of the club pass the night at this wine-shop, so as to be ready for a good view when the "interesting moment" arrives. The following is a specimen of the circular which is sent to the members by the Secretary of the club previous to an execution: "I am happy to inform you that the execution of —— will take place to-morrow. Don't fail to be present. He is afraid to die; that will be amusing."

SATURDAY ★ JOURNAL.

BUCKWHEAT CAKES.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
  And mind so far descended,
As never to himself hath said—
  "Oh, buckwheat cakes are splendid!"
What's all the glory of old Rome—
  Or wreaths from old Parnassus?
What's all the other joys of home
  Beside these cakes and 'lasses?
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
  Feast, poets, by your fountains!
But give to me whene'er I dine
  These cakes piled up like mountains.
This morn the cook was baking cakes;
  The fire was brightly burning;
I thought it wasn't any *shakes*
  To try *my* hand at turning.
The first one I essayed to turn
  (The art is easily mastered,
If you will only stop to learn)
  I on the stovepipe plastered.
The next time I had better luck;
  The art I fast was stealing;
For, by a gentle twist it stuck
  Above me on the ceiling.
The third one I was better at,
  The art I now saw into;
It came down on the household cat,
  And it went through the window!
The fourth I turned with better grace,
  And with a back-hand action
I stuck it flat upon my face,
  And—quit with satisfaction!

Bianca's Champion.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

BIANCA CAMPBELL, the pretty little blonde heiress of Oaklands, stood at the deep bay-window of the old family mansion, one blustering November evening, gazing listlessly at the bank of crimson-tipped leaden clouds that hid the setting sun.

"I do wonder if he will come to-morrow," she murmured, her little fingers tapping on the pane. "One year ago, come to-morrow night, I promised to wed Sylvester Vincent, because I thought I really loved him. But now, another has crossed my path—one younger and fairer than the naval officer, whose brilliant uniform must have captivated my heart. I do not love Sylvester Vincent now—I was foolish to give him the promise he craved on bended knees; and oh! that some one would tell me how I could honorably break my word, to become the bride of Henri De Maintanon."

Sylvester Vincent was a sea-captain, and a native of the busy Oriental city, near which the mansion of Oaklands stood. He dearly loved the seas, had attained his thirtieth year, was handsome, though tanned, refined, and chivalrous. With undisguised affection, he had watched Bianca grow to bewitching womanhood, and, as she has admitted, won the promise of her hand. Then, with a happy heart, he left her, the Seamew spread her sails, and Bianca's lover turned his face toward a distant portion of the globe.

At the end of a year, he had said, he would return, and claim the fulfillment of her promise.

A month after the sailing of the Seamew, a stranger crossed Bianca's path, and found his way across Oaklands' threshhold.

He was a young Frenchman—an *attache* of the French legation at Washington—and an invalid, seeking health. Handsome, courteous and agreeable, he soon obtained an *entree* into the best society of the sea-shore retreat, and the wealthier portion of the community vied with each other to do Monsieur Henri De Maintanon honor.

Roland Campbell—in whose veins ran the blood of Bruce's adherents—forgot that his daughter was the promised bride of the playmate of her childhood, and resolved that she should wed the secretary, whose prospects of a dukedom were, according to his representations, quite flattering.

And, as the days waned, the foreigner, strong as a young lion, did not return to his post; and Bianca, almost forgetting her seafaring lover, believed that she loved him.

"Oh! that some one would tell me how I can honorably break my word," she sighed, over and over again, as she stood at the window, tapping upon the pane with an impatient air.

Suddenly her father, who had stolen on tiptoe into the apartment, lightly touched her shoulder, and caused her to turn upon him, with a pretty cry of affright.

"So my little girl prefers a De Maintanon to a Vincent?" he said, half interrogatively, with a faint smile.

"So you overheard my reflections."

"Yes, Bianca, and I am proud to tell you that it pleases me."

"Father!"

She started back as she uttered the word, for her parent had drawn a folded paper from his bosom.

"Ah!" he cried, "already to guess the contents of this sheet!"

"I guess at nothing," she said, a strange emotion pervading her voice. "Does that journal's contents affect me?"

"Yes; they sever the engagement betwixt yourself and Sylvester Vincent."

"I do not comprehend you, father," she cried. "Your words are wrapped in mystery; explain."

He slowly unfolded the paper, and thrust it into Bianca's hands. His finger described a marked paragraph.

The heiress drew nearer the fading light, and soon mastered the lines, informatory of the wreck of the Seamew off Cape Hatteras, and the loss of all on board.

"You are free now," said her father, as she returned the paper, without uttering a word.

Free!

The word sounded strangely and accusingly in her ear.

Often, when alone—when imagination brought the handsome face of Henri De Maintanon before her—she had wished that the Seamew would never return; and now, like an accusing sprite, the fulfillment of that wish rushed before her vision.

"Bianca, why don't you speak?" cried her father, gazing upon her face, now ghastly pale in the gloaming.

"The terrible news has unnerved me," she said, starting at the unnatural sound of her own voice. "It was so unexpected; and, father, you must excuse my further presence until morning;" and, jerking the paper from his hand, she hurried from the apartment.

Once in her chamber, she re-read the tidings, and buried her pale face in her hands.

"It is my work, my work!" she groaned, in the agony that swept over her soul. "That wish—that unhallowed wish! Oh, could I undo the deed; but, alas! 'tis too late, too late!" and "too late!" rung forever in her ears.

Then, in the moments of repentance, the old love returned, and the ambitious girl would have given her heirship for the life of Sylvester Vincent.

But not until the "great day" would the sea give up its dead.

Months flitted away, and, save a brief absence, the young *attache* of the French legation never left Bianca's side.

She seemed to have forgotten her old lover, for whose death, for Henri's sake, she had eagerly wished, and again Bianca Campbell was the queen of mirth.

"I wonder who will be crowned queen of beauty on the morrow," she said, one summer evening, looking up into the darkly scintillating eyes of her foreign lover.

"Who other than thy beautiful self?" he said.

"Pshaw!" she cried, blushing under his passioned look. "Others are fairer than I—there's Augusta Chalfant—"

"Whose beauty pales beside thine," cried the adoring Frenchman.

The morrow—the day of the modern tournament—broke bright and beautiful upon the sea-shore world. The *fete* had been advertised near and far, and mailed and plumed gallants flocked from every quarter, each eager to crown his "bright particular star" the "queen of love and beauty."

The seats around the tilting ring were crowned with ladies fair, and, after the manner of the days of chivalry, the knights rode into the circle, and the tournament began.

Knight after knight was vanquished by the knight of the Black Stars, who was none other than Henri De Maintanon, upon whose breast-plate glittered a monster ebon star.

The victor of the contest was to crown the queen of love and beauty, and the people saw in the Black Star knight the favored one.

At length he spurred his steed around the ring, calling aloud upon any new knight to couch lances with him. Like the warlike Macedonian, he had conquered every champion, and the ceremony of demanding more was mere custom.

The voices of the spectators were proclaiming him the victor, when a horseman dashed into the circle.

The new-comer was clad in a long, snowy mantle, and wore a cowl after the manner of the friars who followed Richard to the Holy Land. His face was concealed by a white garment, and his lance and steed boasted of the same spotless hue.

A little esquire, also robed in white, who attended him, announced "The White Warrior Monk," and retired from the ring.

His arrival was unexpected, and the esquire maintained a taciturnity that increased the mystery that shrouded his master.

Undaunted, and flushed with success, the knight of the Black Star spurred his charger to the conflict.

The antagonists met in the center of the ring, and Henri De Manitanon was hurled from his steed, to be picked up with a broken arm!

The "Warrior Monk" was proclaimed the victor, and commanded to crown the fairest lady present, queen of love and beauty.

He seized the garland, and his eyes swept the assemblage.

Beneath an elevated position sat Bianaca Campbell, surrounded by the beauties of the country. An expression of chagrin had swept across her face when the Black Star knight was unhorsed, and she despaired of receiving the floral crown, which her ungovernable ambition craved.

Who would the "Spotless" crown?

This interrogative parted many a fair lip, and placed everybody on the *qui vive*.

Suddenly the searching eye of the unknown rested upon the pavilion, and he galloped thither. Dismounting, he bounded up the steps, and, to the surprise of all, placed the tribute upon the golden curls of Bianaca Campbell!

Having accomplished the corronation, he retired without uttering a word, and became the heiress' champion by unhorsing every knight that rode against him. When the tournament ended, he mysteriously disappeared, and Bianaca rode homeward, wondering who her champion might be.

Days passed away, leaving the mystery unsolved.

With his arm encased in a sling, the secretary came often to Oaklands.

"Bianaca," he said, one golden Autumn day, gazing upon the beautiful heiress, who reclined upon the elegant sofa, with a huge dog of the Newfoundland breed crouched at her feet, "Bianca, truly the 'queen of love and beauty,' I whispered yestereve of love undying, and this is the hour named for your decision."

She laughed merrily.

"Suppose I should whisper 'no.'"

"I harbor no such supposition," he said.

"Then I must startle you."

Her countenance drew him to his feet.

"To your proposition of marriage, *Vasques Loinville*, I answer *no!*"

He strode forward, and gazed down upon her, too angry to speak.

She secretly enjoyed his passion.

"Vasques Loinville!" he hissed, at last.

"Yes. I know all now. You, sir, are an unprincipled adventurer, into whose artfully-spread net I would have fallen, had not my champion of the tournament put me on my guard."

"The lying villain!"

"Bestow not your name upon another," she retorted. "My champion is none other than Sylvester Vincent. Sir, you stare at me with an air of incredulity. I will explain. The Seamew of the Thompson, and not the Seamew of the Gloucester, line, was wrecked, and Sylvester Vincent, to whom my hand is promised, and who, know *you*, is here."

He turned, to confront Sylvester Vincent and a French officer of Justice, and the next moment he was a prisoner.

The Seamew of the Gloucester line was tardy in returning; but it arrived in time to save ambitious Bianaca Campbell from becoming the bride of a false secretary of legation, and heir to a dukedom.

The French officer had accompanied Vincent from France, for the purpose of apprehending the adventurer, whom justice wanted at her bar.

The little episode above described terminated Bianca's ambition, and, when the l aves were falling, she became the happy bride of her old love and champion.

BIANCA'S CHAMPION.

Recollections of the West.

The Great Horse-thief League.

BY CAPT. BRUIN ADAMS.

A FEW miles from the flourishing city of L——, in Kentucky, there stands, in the midst of a noble park, a fine, large brick mansion, which, with its surroundings, gives every evidence of luxury and great wealth.

From the house to the turnpike—the distance is some quarter of a mile or more—the road passes up an avenue, bordered upon either side with those most beautiful of all shade trees—the English elm—which, at the proper spot, divides, and, sweeping away in a graceful curve, right and left, again unite directly in front of the spacious portico.

This is, or, rather, was, the home of the rich Coleman Bradley, whose history and tragic fate would, of itself, make a romance of unusual and remarkable interest.

It is said that crime, like various diseases, becomes epidemical, in certain localities, and at certain times, and, like disease, runs its course, dies out and remains quiescent, until certain circumstances—or *something else*—brings it once more to life.

Kentucky, like all of the Western and Southern States, has repeatedly been subjected to epipemical *horse-thieving*. For months, even years, the loss of a horse by theft will be the rarest of occurrences, and then, suddenly, without any "premonitory symptoms," the thieves will begin their nefarious work over an extended section of country, and with such skill and daring as to set at defiance all efforts for their capture, or recovery of the property stolen.

At such times, the country is thrown into the very greatest possible state of excitement. Vigilance committees are hastily organized—every honest man becomes a special detective. Meetings are held, and plans discussed; for be it known, that, throughout the States I have mentioned, there is no crime—not even murder, I may venture to say—that is held in such utter detestation as *horse-stealing*. A man may shoot another down upon the public highway, and still have a chance for life at the hands of the law; but let one be once convicted of stealing a horse—be it ever so worthless—and his doom is irrevocably sealed.

In the year 183–, one of the periodical outbreaks of horse-stealing swept over Kentucky. So numerous and so daring were the robberies, happening, as they did, all over the State at the same time, that the people were not long in concluding, and justly, that the work was that of a thoroughly-organized and very extensive band of men who were leagued together for this especial purpose.

But, notwithstanding the fact that the utmost vigilance was exercised, that many sections were patroled by mounted men, day and night, that hundreds of people were subjected to unceasing scrutiny, the depradations continued, and even grew more numerous, in proportion, as the excitement increased.

It seemed impossible to fasten the crime upon any one. Large numbers were arrested, but, in every case, well-known responsible parties would be sure to step forth and swear them clear

To such an extent was the thievery carried, that, at last, those who owned valuable animals were forced to bring them *into their houses* at night; and even this, in some instances, was found unavailing, as the animals were taken thence as readily as though they had been in the stables.

At length it was secretly determined to employ a number of skillful detectives, such as can only be found in large cities, where constant crime produces them, and forthwith two of the best that the great metropolis possessed were sent for, and the "case" given into their hands.

To such men the mystery was simply no mystery at all.

Hitherto the criminals had been searched for amid the lower classes, in the humbler walks of life. These professional thief-takers struck higher, and, as it proved, with deadly accuracy.

In less than a week a list of names was handed the regulators. They saw upon it some of the best, most substantial and wealthiest men in the section, and in stubborn disbelief handed it back, paid off the detectives, considering them either ignorant or crazy, and went on with the search themselves.

One of the detectives returned to New York. The other determined to remain and prosecute the matter upon his "own hook," trusting to the future for his reward.

Singular as it may seem, one of the names that had appeared, and the most prominent of all, upon that "black list" that had been refused, was that of Coleman Bradley, the rich land-owner and bank-director.

It was the accusation against this man that had done more than all else to make the vigilance committee refuse to entertain the detectives' suspicions but, nevertheless, it was upon him that the thief-taker fixed his eyes. I need not pause to tell of the various devices used to obtain certain information of the rich man's complicity in the numerous crimes. Months of unceasing labor and watchfulness passed, and still Coleman Bradley was seen among men, transacting his business as he had always done.

But the shadow of coming disaster had fallen across the threshold of the splendid mansion, and ruin followed speedily.

One of the most remarkable facts concerning the many crimes, was that the stolen horses had repeatedly been tracked to a certain point, and there the trail had invariably been lost.

Upon this the detective built his theory, and by reason of the very thing that had defeated the others, he found his way to success. He saw that the trail ended in a small stream of water. He knew that it thence went either up or down the bed of that stream to some point where the nature of the soil would prevent any "sign" being left, and for such a spot he searched diligently, and at length found it.

Upon the right hand, or eastern side of the creek, at a certain locality, there lay a broad, flat rock, perhaps fifteen feet square, and from this rock to the base of a densely-wooded hill, the side of which was broken and covered with huge bowlders and cliffs, the soil was covered with a flinty deposit upon which the foot of a horse would leave not the slightest mark.

Here was forged the first link in the chain of evidence that was to bind and bring the guilty to judgment.

Within the timber on the hill-side the detective concealed himself at nights to watch.

For more than a week his labor was in vain. Nothing suspicious occurred, but he nevertheless persevered, and was at length rewarded. One intensely dark night, the officer, from his perch, amid the branches of a tree, heard the sound of plashing water, and presently the sharp ring, or *click* of shod hoofs upon the hard surface of the great flat rock. Horses were being led from out the bed of the stream, and a moment later, hoof-strokes upon the flinty soil, told that they were advancing toward where he lay.

Across the open space between the creek, he saw a number of horses led, probably half-a-dozen.

They paused a moment at the base of the hill, and then the animals were brought up, one at a time, and again collected upon a small level space directly in front of a number of huge rocks, or cliffs, piled together in a confused mass.

Again a horse was led forward, directly toward the face of the cliff, and almost before the spy had realized the fact, it had disappeared, apparantly, within the flinty wall.

Another and another followed; a rough, grating sound was heard, and then the hill-side was once more deserted, save by the vigilant officer.

Springing lightly down from his place of concealment, he approached the spot where the remarkable disappearance had taken place, and, although he searched closely, yet he could discover not the slightest opening or break in the wall.

This, however, was but a trial of the eye. He would test more severely, and drawing a keen blade from his bosom, he began to probe, with its point, the apparently hard limestone mass. At the third stroke he felt the weapon penetrate what he knew to be *wood*, and then, as if apparently satisfied, he replaced the weapon, and cautiously left the place.

"A subterranean stable," he muttered, as he mounted his horse that was concealed in a thicket near by. "And if I am not mighty out of it, the other end of the cavern emerges within yonder brick mansion," and he turned his gaze off through the darkness, where the outlines of Coleman Bradley's house could be faintly seen.

The second night following the events described above, and just as the distant bells upon the tower were striking the middle hour, a band of horsemen, fifty strong, turned off from the turnpike, and silently filed into the avenue leading to the mansion of Coleman Bradley.

They were a band of regulators; all were masked and otherwise disguised, so as to render their recognition a matter impossible.

Silently the house was surrounded with a cordon of pickets, and then twenty-five dark figures, leaving their horses in charge of a holder, moved off in the direction of the wooded hill.

In front of the mysterious place in the cliffs, where the horses had been seen to disappear, these men halted for a brief consultation.

This was quickly ended; several stepped forward with crowbars and wrenches, and with as little noise as possible, began the task of removing the heavy oaken door that had been fitted into the mouth of the cavern, and so carved, seamed and painted as to resemble perfectly the adjoining rock.

It was a laborious and difficult work; but at length the barrier gave way before the skilled artisans that were at work, and a dark, gloomy cavern, running back into the bowels of the earth, stood revealed.

Still moving with extreme caution, the regulators advanced; but scarcely had they turned the first angle in the tortuous passage, when a blinding light was flashed in their eyes, the sharp report of a pistol followed, and one of the number staggered back and fell, shot through the heart.

A desperate conflict instantly began between the regulators and horse-thieves, of whom quite a number were in the subterranean stable at the time.

In the mean time, those who were guarding the house, apprised of what was going on beneath the earth, burst in the doors, secured the frightened inmates, and from one forced the secret of the way of communication from the house to the cavern.

The conflict was at its hight, when this reinforcement made the attack in the robbers' rear.

Nothing could withstand such overwhelming advantage as was possessed by the regulators, and one by one the horse-thieves fell, fighting to the last.

Not one escaped, nor did any, save Coleman Bradley, who was secured in his bed, fall into the attacking parties' hands alive. Within the immense underground stable a very large number of valuable animals were found, many of which had been stolen in distant localities, and brought hither for safe-keeping.

The next morning the dead body of Coleman Bradley was found suspended to a tree near the public highway.

This broke up the band, of which the rich man was the chief, the ramifications of which extended all over the South, and which is, to this day, spoken of as the "Great League."

Short Stories from History.

Expatriated Citizens.—We read in recent reports from France of the great number of Communists doomed, by judgment of the courts, to perpetual exile—some to foreign lands, others to the French colonies in the South Pacific. The sad history of some of those leaders of the attempted Communist revolution vividly recalls the distresses of the French revolution of 1789-90.

No event, either in ancient or modern times, ever created so many exiles as the French revolution; notwithstanding the difficulty which often occurred of escaping from the merciless fangs of the guillotine, by which so many thousands were immolated in the sacred name of liberty. The following numerical estimate of the emigration from France, between the 14th of July, 1789, and the 6th of November, 1790, was published at Paris, by order of the Directory. The total number was 124,000, including 9,000 women of the nobility; 16,920 noblemen; 28,000 priests; 404 belonging to the parliament; 8,492 nobles in the military profession; 9,933 landed proprietors; 2,867 lawyers; 230 bankers; 7,801 merchants; 324 attorneys (*notaires*); 528 physicians; 540 surgeons; 3,268 farmers; 2,000 nobles in the naval service; 22,729 artisans; 2,800 servants; 3,000 wives of artisans; 3,033 children of both sexes; 4,428 nuns (*religieuses*).

England, notwithstanding the long cherished national enmity, was the first, last, and best asylum of the French emigrants, who were not only received and treated with the utmost individual hospitality, but had also the most munificent support from the British government; a support which was never for a moment withheld, from the commencement of the revolution, until after the restoration of the Bourbons. The following sums granted, during a period of eight years only, by parliament, for the relief of the suffering clergy and laity of France, are a proud monument of national liberality: In 1795, £136,959; 1796, £269,440; 1797, £379,000; 1798, £12,677; 1799, £233,574; 1800, £302,798; 1801, £277,772; 1802, £173,535.

It is thus persecution and outlawry depletes populations. France especially has suffered fearfully by her cruel proscriptions of her own citizens. The Huguenot slaughters and anti-Protestant edicts inaugurated by the French governing authorities drove from France, in five years, at least 300,000 people. Such is the madness of bigots and the hateful character of all despotisms, whether of church or state.

An Artless Reply.—The following little anecdote has been left in Dr. Wolcott's own handwriting:

When the Duke of Kent was last in America, he took a stroll into the country, and entering a neat little cottage, saw a pretty girl with a book in her hand. "What books do you read, my dear?" asked his royal highness. The girl, with the most artless innocence, replied: "Sir, the Bible and Peter Pindar!"